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THE MUSEUM OF PRACTICAL GEOLOGY.

BY ROBERT HUNT, F.R.S.



It is certain that Geology has advanced, from the questionable position it for some time occupied, to become a science of acknowledged practical utility. The early Geologists were regarded as visionary men—whose visions were, like opium dreams, of a diseased, and indeed often of a dangerous character. The modern cultivators of this science are consulted by practical men, as being the best—the safest—guides in many undertakings of the highest importance.

To the Engineer who would drive a tunnel, construct a canal, dig a cutting, or form a harbour—to the Architect who desires to secure a permanent structure—to the Miner in his search for coal and other minerals—to the City,

indeed, for which a good water-supply is required, and to the Well-sinker or the Artesian Well-borer,—the qualified Geologist is now admitted to be the most reliable adviser. This is acknowledged by all reflecting men who have to deal in any way with the crust of the Earth.

Thousands of pounds have been saved by those who have availed themselves of the truths of geological science; while immense sums of money have been squandered by men who have neglected its teachings.

To the uninstructed, the surface of the earth does not indicate that order which becomes evident to the educated observer.

"Rocks piled on rocks, in wild confusion hurl'd,
Romantic wrecks of a yet earlier world,"

is the picture drawn in the mind of even the intelligent student, ere yet the high priests of Geology have taught him to read the *sermons in stones* aright.

When, however, he has been instructed, he at once discovers, amidst the seeming confusion, a grand system of order. The key—like that in one of the northern fables—being put into his hand, he can penetrate to the secret recesses of the mountains, and examine the structure of the Earth's crust, upon which myriads of ages had been expended, ere yet it was fitted to become the abode of intellectual beings.

Reader, enter the Hall of the Museum of Practical Geology, in Jermyn Street, and against the western wall there hangs a map of a large portion of England and the whole of Wales, executed by the officers of the Geological Survey, on the scale of one inch to a mile. This great work, commenced by Sir Henry de la Beche, and continued under the direction of Sir Roderick I. Murchison, indicates, in colours, the geological structure of our island. Here the eye can embrace all the country from the Land's End to Anglesea, and from the shores of Wales to the eastern counties. The sequence of the geological formations is rendered evident to the casual observer, and a little study will lead to the conviction that the present condition of the Earth's surface is due to the progressive action of great phenomena extended over vast periods of time.

Geology enables us to penetrate the arcana of Time, and to detect the vast influences of simple causes, when extended over ages.

By atmospheric influences, rocks have been disintegrated, and from their *débris* newer rocks have been formed; these, in their turns, have yielded again to the action of air and water, and yet another form of mineral structure has resulted. So it was from the Beginning; and so it is now. Nature pursues, without rest, those labours which are for ever destroying and for ever building up—accomplishing a design too vast to be embraced by any human mind.

Philosophy delights to study those sublime phenomena—Popular Science desires to know how this study can be made available for the benefit of man; and to this end it is our purpose to frame this theme. It is quite possible to ascend from the humbler path of utility, to the more exalting position of contemplating Nature's work, for the delight, alone, which such contemplations afford. Therefore, while we endeavour to show the value of a Collection illustrative of the practical applications of Geological

Science, we shall not hesitate to advance to a consideration of the philosophy of the science when it may appear advantageous to do so.

Every rock has its own peculiar physical and chemical condition, and its mineral contents are generally well defined. Upon these points its economic value depends; and the *Museum of Economic Geology*—as it was appropriately named by its originator, Sir Henry de la Beche—was founded to illustrate these points especially. This establishment in Jermyn Street, now known as the *Museum of Practical Geology*—although it is open to the public free of any charge every day, except Friday and Sunday—is less known to the busy world than it deserves to be. This arises, we believe, from the fact that it illustrates but one Science, and that Science one with which the public has necessarily an imperfect acquaintance.

The British Isles produce, annually, minerals and metals having the enormous value of upwards of £40,000,000 sterling. This vast sum is added each year to our National Wealth by the industry of man exerted upon the rocky surface of the Earth. To obtain this, thousands of miners toil in the deep, dark recesses of the hills—thousands of quarrymen labour on the mountain sides,—while thousands more of the “sons of toil” exert their skilled labour to give to Nature’s raw material a marketable value. The raw material is collected in this our really National Museum, and the processes of manufacture are, as far as possible, illustrated. Thus the Collection divides itself into two principal groups—THE NATURAL MATERIALS, Geological and Mineralogical, which may be studied as to their Lithological character, their Geological order as indicated by their fossil contents, or in their Mineralogical constitution; and the ARTIFICIAL PRODUCTIONS, exhibiting the results of human labour aided by the discoveries of Science.

The Vestibule and lower Hall of the building are devoted almost entirely to the exhibition of our building and ornamental stones. The Granites of Cornwall and Devonshire, of Scotland and Ireland, are shown in polished columns, pilasters, and slabs. We would also direct attention to two screens which have been recently fixed in this Hall, in which are exhibited several Porphyries and other ornamental stones, which are quite new to the public; while of the Scotch (Peterhead) red granite there is a tazza, remarkable for its size and workmanship. From Shapfell, in Westmoreland, and from Lee Moor, in Devonshire, there are pedestals exhibiting peculiar granites, which add, from their curious structure and pleasing colour, to our decorative stones. This important stone, the most durable, when well selected, which our rocks afford, is now employed in the construction of those works which are supposed to be of the most enduring character, or to require the greatest amount of strength. Light-houses built on the rocks around our shores, which are to resist the beat of the severest winter storms; sea-walls and docks; the fortifications now in process of construction upon our coasts; and our finest bridges—are of Granite. Not merely for our own national works is this stone employed;

it is extensively exported. With Cornish granite they are now building very extensive docks at Copenhagen; and with the polished granite of Penryn a vast sepulchral monument is in process of construction in Tuscany. The porphyritic granites, similar to the fine mass which forms the sarcophagus of the Duke of Wellington, of which there are several varieties, deserve careful attention.

In the cases containing the cubes of granite (for building stones of all kinds are exhibited in six-inch cubes) will be found a stone but little known, which is equal to granite in durability, more varied in colour, and often of superior beauty. This is a kind of porphyry, known locally as *Elvan*, and existing in Cornwall in vast quantities. It occurs in large veins, which have forced themselves, when in a fluid or semi-fluid state, through the granites and associated clay-slates. It is much used as a building stone, and the churches and cottages which have been built of elvan delight the artist's eye by the charm of colour. The few specimens found in the cases of this Museum will show the character and capabilities of this stone. "Its durability and appearance," says Sir Henry de la Beche, "may be seen in many churches and old mansions, where the fine carvings of the ornamental parts are as sharp as the day they were put up—occasionally the felspar crystals may have been decomposed and have been washed out, but the silico-felspathic base has remained firm, thus preserving the sharp character of the work." The Granites, Elvans, the Syenites of Leicestershire, the Porphyries proper, and the Greenstones, pass one into the other by almost insensible gradations. It may not be amiss, therefore, to inform the reader, that the main distinctions are that *Granite* contains felspar, quartz, and mica, crystallized together; *Syenite*, so called from the ancient quarries of Syene, in Egypt, is felspar, quartz, and hornblend; true *Porphyry*, consisting of crystals of felspar in a felspathic base—the type of this rock being the red porphyry of Egypt, the *Rosso-antico*; while *Greenstone* is hornblend and felspar. Of this last the Museum has a good example in a copy of the bust of the Egyptian Bubastes; this stone is from Pembrokeshire, and equals in solidity the finest examples found in Egypt.

The Serpentine Rocks have, since the Great Exhibition of 1851, become familiar to the public. Of these there are many finely-polished examples in this Hall. The quarries at the Lizard are being worked to greater depths, new varieties of stone are discovered, and larger and yet more perfect masses obtained. It may now be safely stated, that no Italian marbles can excel, in beauty of colour or variety of structure, those highly-ornamental rocks we can produce in any quantity at home.

Amongst the ornamental stones of the British Isles, the Irish Serpentine—or, as it is commonly called, Connemara Marble—must not be forgotten. Some beautiful slabs of this bright green stone, from Ballinahinch, in Galway, adorn the eastern wall, where they are judiciously worked in with the Derbyshire marbles and the Serpentine of Cornwall.

The marbles of Derbyshire and Devonshire swell the list of our ornamental stones. These limestones contain, and indeed owe their beauty to, the remains of organisms of which there are few living representatives—the beautifully-formed and numerous-jointed *Pentacrinus caput Medusæ*, which is occasionally dredged from great depths off the coral reefs of the West India Islands, being the finest living example of the ancient family of *crinoids*, whose stony fragments form the mass of the Derbyshire marbles. Mr. Parkinson informs us, that the upper part of the skeleton of one species of *Encrinite* (*Stone lily*) consists of nearly 27,000 ossicles, or small bones. These having been dislocated are cemented together in those marbles by carbonate of lime; and being in the process of manufacture cut in many different sections, and polished, they assume a variety of forms. The name of *Wheel-stone* (*Entrochite*) is given to the rocks containing those broken stems,—they are commonly known as Entrochal Marble. The Shell marbles are no less beautiful, and very varied in design and colour—the marbles of Western England, made up, almost entirely, of corals and sponges, contesting the palm with the lithological formations of the Central counties.

The Freestones of Portland and the Purbeck Marbles—the Sandstones of the Midland districts—the Millstone Grits of Derbyshire, Yorkshire, &c.—the Dolomites, or Magnesian Limestones, which occur so extensively in Nottinghamshire and the adjoining counties—the Oolites of the well-known quarries around Bath—and the Lias limestones which range from the mouth of the Tees to Lyme Regis, with many other stones, will be found in this Collection. To the architect and the builder this division of the Museum of Practical Geology is invaluable. Not only are the stones exhibited in cubes, but, for the purpose of showing how some of them will carve, there is exhibited copies of the Farnese Hercules executed in Portland stone, and of the Guistiniani Minerva and Antinous carved in different varieties of the Magnesian Limestone.

A tessellated pavement, executed by Minton—the design of which was taken from the Roman pavement discovered at Woodchester—and other examples of Mosaic, illustrate some of the useful applications of clay. These, with illustrations of cements and plasters, contribute alike to ornament an apartment which may justly be termed a “Marble Hall,” within which is gathered examples of the rock treasures of our islands, leading us to regret that the feeling of nationality does not extend the uses of them for the purposes of architectural decoration.

The visitor will ascend from this Hall to the principal floor, which is, with its two Galleries, one of the finest exhibition-rooms in London. We can only deal with the general features of the, in every way remarkable and instructive, Collection which is before us. The great object has been to exhibit the material which Nature has given us in all its native varieties, and to illustrate, as far as possible, the processes by which each substance has been made available for use or ornament. Every variety of

copper ore, for example, which has been produced in this country and become an article of commerce, is exhibited. These specimens being arranged against the walls, we find in the table-case immediately before them a very perfect series, showing every stage of the process of smelting the ore, until it finishes with an example of refined copper. The ductility of this metal is exemplified by beating a flat sheet of copper into an elegant vase; and in the extension, by rolling, of a penny-piece into a ribbon ten yards in length. In another case near this we have the application of copper in the Arts and Art Manufacture. Bronze is formed by associating tin, and Brass by combining zinc, with the copper. Both these metals are exhibited in the manner already described. Then their applications—as simple metals and as alloys, in statuettes and other castings, in copper, in tin, in bronze and in brass—are displayed. With these will also be found illustrations of electro-metallurgy; and we would especially point attention to the electrotypes, in copper, of the heads of Ocean and of Melpomene. The collection of iron ores is of the most perfect description; and the results of the variations adopted in the different districts in smelting these ores can be examined in the table-case which illustrates Iron manufacture. From Pig Iron, we advance to Malleable Iron, and from it to Steel. There, in the same case, we see a mass of the best iron, costing about threepence per pound, and by its side the hair-pendulum-spring for watches, a pound weight of which springs would cost £400. Again, we have the crude grey iron, and examples of the Berlin castings—so delicate, so beautiful, that they are prized as personal adornments;—and they represent the augmenting power of man's creative genius, the value of these being ten thousand times the original cost of the material.

Upon each of the processes of metallurgy there is an interesting story to tell, but it must be read by the observer from the illustrations given. In connection with iron, we cannot, however, avoid noticing one example of great value in the history of metal working: this is the fore-leg and foot of a young fawn delicately modelled, and cast in bronze—it will be found in one of the table-cases. This formed a portion of a piece of Art manufacture which once adorned the palace of an Assyrian king. Its value, however, consists in the fact, that strength is given to this slender piece of metal-work by a *rod of iron*—thus proving, contrary to an often-repeated statement, that the ancients were well acquainted with the use of this important metal.

The various stages in the process of manufacturing a twisted rifle barrel and in producing Damascused patterns are shown, as well as each stage in the production of the regulation sword-blade. With these, as historically illustrative, is a collection of some of the most celebrated varieties of swords. In this manner is exhibited all the British metalliferous minerals, and their metallurgy is illustrated, as far as illustration by specimens is possible. Minerals from our Colonies, and such Foreign ores as are largely imported and smelted in this country, are also to be

found in the wall-cases. Many of these are of a very remarkable and beautiful character, and will amply repay any study bestowed upon them.

Nature's geometry is so exquisite, that it possesses the power of imparting something of its own perfection to the mind of the observer. There is a psychological effect produced by studying the physical aggregation of atoms into a crystallizing gem, which it is not easy to explain, but which fully illustrates the influence of the beautiful in form in producing purity of feeling. The central Horseshoe-shaped case of this room is filled with examples of this class. Commencing with the Diamond in its natural state, and as cut by the lapidary, we are led through all the other forms of the element Carbon. A beautiful light-refracting gem commences the series; dull plumbago, or graphite or black-lead, follows; then we have the highly carbonaceous coal, coke, and those compounds of carbon and hydrogen which are found native; finishing with another valuable and transparent substance—amber. Sulphur, in all its states, the native salts of soda and potash, boracic acid, fine crystallizations of the sulphate of lime and other salts, especially fluor-spar, succeed each other. Then we have what may be termed the Gem series, in which may be studied the native condition and the manufactured state, of all the important stones which have been, or are, used for ornament.

The cases at the circular end of this Hall are devoted to illustrations of the modes of occurrence of the various metalliferous minerals in our rocks. It is not uncommon to hear persons speaking of mineral veins as if they were something analogous to the veins of the animal body—an idea prevailing that they are tubes, running through the rocks, which have become filled with copper, tin, lead or other minerals, as the case may be. An hour's study of this fine series of examples of these phenomena will dispel this fanciful hypothesis, and convey more correct ideas to the mind than can be imparted by any amount of reading on the subject.

It is true, that even now the scientific world is divided in opinion as to the causes which produced those accumulations of metal in our rocks; and it is equally true, that until the educated Philosopher will descend into the subterranean recesses of the mine and study Nature's works in her secret caves by the light of experience, he is not likely to solve the important problem of the origin of mineral lodes.

There are several models exhibiting the structure of the Earth's crust in the metalliferous districts. One, of Cornwall, displays the junction of the granite and clay-slate rocks with the interpenetrating elvan, and the order in which the lodes (veins) of copper and tin pass through them. Another shows the stratified country of the Alston Moor district, with the occurrence of lead lodes, and the modes of working them. Models of the Forest of Dean and of Ebbw Vale show the distinctions between the deposits of coal or of iron in beds, and of the other minerals in lodes. A very interesting model of the quartz reefs of Australia, and the mode

of working them for their auriferous treasures, adds to the information conveyed by this Collection.

The Model-Room proper extends beyond this large one, and it is crowded with models of Mines and of Mine machinery. Miners' safety lamps, the tools employed in different countries, and indeed all the appliances produced by the stern necessities of this severe labour, are exhibited. We use the word *crowded*, advisedly. Many large models are dispersed over the floor of the larger Hall; and, even there, these useful aids to the acquirement of knowledge are so disposed as to be but imperfectly seen. If our Government could but be taught the value of instructing the people practically—of giving them ideas as well as the signs by which to express the want of them—we should soon see an expansion of this Museum, containing, as it does, illustrations of those mineral treasures upon which mainly depends the position of Great Britain in the scale of civilized nations.

Of clays we have not yet spoken. Their uses were told by Professor Ansted in a recent number of *THE ST. JAMES'S MAGAZINE*. With that article in his hand, the reader should proceed to the study of the Jermyn Street Collection. He will find the native clays, and a fine series of our Fictile manufactures in illustration of their uses. This series includes Roman-British ware, and the earliest as well as the most recent Staffordshire, Plymouth, Bristol, Worcester, Derby, Bow, and Chelsea china, with the wares produced in many other localities. Thus we have the history of the manufacture of pottery in these islands very completely given.

Sands, and the manufacture of Glass, also form a division of great interest. As in Pottery, so the history of Glass-making is told.

We have glass beads from the neck of a lady who probably walked in the streets of Thebes when the scriptural Pharaoh was king—or even at an earlier date; ornamental glass from the palaces of Assyria and Babylon, and, really marvellous examples of the superiority of the Greek and Roman glass manufactures. One case is devoted to Venetian glass—in which will be found many rare instances of the skill of the glass-blowers and moulders of Murano. Contrasted with those are the curiosities of our own days in this always interesting branch of human industry.

It may be asked by some: What connection has the art of enamelling with a Museum devoted to Practical Geology? The reply is ready: the colours on the picture (which is itself on metal) are metallic oxides, and the enamel is itself a vitreous compound of silica with an alkali, and lead or tin,—in many cases perhaps both.

Ancient and modern Mosaics will claim the attention of all who are interested in the arts of decoration. The *opus incertum* of the North of Italy contrast strangely, though not unpleasantly, with the true Roman Mosaic. In some examples from Pompeii we see that stucco was of the same character then, as now; and we find that ordinary paintings, on the cement employed, simulated *fresco*.

There are numerous other objects of interest, which our space will not allow us to notice, both in the productions of Nature and in the works of Art. Leaving our descriptions of applied Geology, with the hope that we have sufficiently indicated the Collection to induce the reader to visit it, we must pass to the division devoted to the science in its more abstract character.

The record of the World's mutations cannot fail to be of the highest interest to every thinking mind. To find treasured in the rocks of our country the remains of creatures who existed myriads of ages ere yet man had being, gives a real sublimity to the science of Geology.

The philosophical Geologist works in one of the noblest fields over which the human mind is allowed to exert its powers; and great must be the reward of every new discovery telling him the story of ancient life.

The leaves have been taken from the book of Nature; and in the two Galleries of this Museum they are spread out for our instruction. In the lower gallery are the earliest forms of organization yet discovered—plant-like zoophytes and worm-like animals. Upon these advance a series of invertebrate animals with jointed bodies—chiefly *Trilobites*. Molluscos animals then blend with the already existing creatures; and we have fossil remains marking the presence of animals of a high type at a time when Shropshire and Wales were yet covered by a wide-spread sea. The fossil remains enumerated belong chiefly to the Silurian rocks, which have been so closely studied and so ably elucidated by the present Director-General of the Geological Survey, Sir Roderick Impey Murchison. Crinoids (lily-shaped animals) and crustaceans—especially the *Pterygotus*, an ancient lobster some seven feet in length—will attract attention amongst the other organic forms.

These, and similar remains, are the earliest evidences of life in the world which have as yet rewarded the labours of the Geologist. Few can observe these without feeling that, even in their ruins, the forms which are preserved to us are full of beauty. With how much delicacy has the finger of nature shaped the armour by which the soft bodies of its most ancient creatures were protected, and how symmetric are the lines of ornamentation by which they are adorned!

The Old Red-Sandstone series follows next in order, with its vertebrate animals. Fishes are numerous, reptiles begin to appear, while vegetable relics begin to tell us of a Flora, of which there are no previous indications. The Carboniferous System in which our coal occurs then presents to us the evidences of a world teeming with vegetable growth. Ferns, mosses, club mosses, &c., which are preserved, indicate its general character.

In evidence of the careful record made by Nature of the ever-recurring phenomena, we have, in this Collection, slabs showing the flowing and the recession of ancient seas. Ripple marks are solidified in sand indurated to stone, and even the beating rain-drops have left their impressions on those shores on which they fell between the ebbing and flowing of a tide.

Thus we know, that the oldest Oceans had tides—that the Heavens were obscured by clouds when there was but little dry land in our hemisphere, and that little was occupied by reptiles, whose footprints are preserved to indicate their existence.

In the Upper Gallery we commence with the Trias, or New Red-Sandstone fossils, and in like manner proceed in an ascending series. *Ammonites* are here in abundance. Gigantic cuttle-fish have left their internal bones. *Echinodermata* are abundant; *Crustaceans* swarm: we arrive at the true reptile period, and see the Earth becoming the fit abode of terrestrial animals.

A more perfect Collection for the Paleontologist was never brought together than that to which he has free access in this Collection. This has been obtained by the labours of the Geological Survey.

The officers, under the general direction of Sir Roderick I. Murchison, and the local direction of Professors Ramsay and Jukes, have already mapped a large portion of England, the whole of Wales, a part of Ireland, and a few counties in Scotland. The work is steadily proceeding. It has, from its perfection, become the type upon which every Geological Survey in Europe, Asia, America and in our Colonies, has been carried out—the practical utility of the maps being proved by the eagerness with which they are purchased as soon as published.

In this imperfect sketch we have endeavoured to indicate an educational establishment of the utmost value to a country depending, as ours does, on its mineral wealth. In addition to the Museum and the Geological Survey, the Government School of Mines and the Mining Record Office are within the walls between Jermyn Street and Piccadilly; so that, altogether, the national establishment to which we draw attention will be seen to possess several especial claims on the public.

Whether regarded from a scientific or from a commercial point of view, the union which we may group under the general title that heads this paper must be considered as eminently useful in all its designs.

Whether the purposes of its Founder are carried out to their full extent, it must be admitted, is doubtful. There is, however, sufficient evidence to prove that every member of the establishment desires to promote to the utmost of his power the science of Geology, and those sciences which illustrate and explain all Geological Phenomena—while they strive to show, in the most easily intelligible manner, how an abstract truth may become of great practical worth. With increased space, and with enlarged means at their disposal, there is sufficient evidence to show that the Director General and his officers would greatly add to the utility of the Museum of Practical Geology.

CAN WRONG BE RIGHT?

A TALE.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

XXII.

THE leading newspaper of the day contained the following :—

“During the last night of the protracted debate which has excited so much interest and was wound up in the Commons by Sir Oswald Harvey’s eloquent speech, recalling by its power no less than by its beauty the electric oratory of a past age, a little incident occurred which, though almost too trifling to record, has been much talked of at the clubs.

“As the honourable member escaped from the cheering that greeted him from all sides of the House, there was a rush to the lobby—some desiring to offer their congratulations, others eager to satisfy their curiosity by another look at the ‘new orator.’ The cheering was repeatedly renewed while Sir Oswald, faint and exhausted, leaning on a friend’s arm, made his way to his carriage, where Lady Harvey, as usual, waited his coming.

“A reporter, who, it is said, was totally unknown to any of his brothers of the Press, attempting to cross from the light to the dark side of the lobby, stumbled; and in endeavouring to save himself his hat fell off, discovering more hair than is usually cultivated by ‘lords of the creation.’ The gentleman did not wait to recover his hat, but disappeared amid the crowd, that was greater without than within the walls of St. Stephen; and the incident would hardly have been observed had not the person attracted the attention of the honourable member for H—, his appearance, it is said, recalling the memory of a very dear friend. After some delay, Sir Oswald was assisted to his carriage. Inquiries at the honourable baronet’s residence in Grosvenor Place have been more numerous than could have even been anticipated, and the replies were that Sir Oswald was suffering from fatigue, and was about to leave town for a week’s rest.

“We are authorized to state, that the police have received instructions to discover who the gentleman was who intruded himself among the reporters.”

Another paper set forth that—

“The doorkeepers of the House of Commons have been closely questioned as to what strangers were present during the debate when Sir Oswald Harvey so electrified the House; but such numbers had been admitted that we believe it impossible for them to give anything like a correct return. It is rumoured that a determination has been come to, and is to be acted upon, that, except *by a member’s order*, no stranger be permitted to enter the House. This is as it should be.”

Another paragraph :—

“We rejoice to hear that Sir Oswald and Lady Harvey have returned to their house in Grosvenor Place. They attend the Queen’s ball to-morrow

night. Lady Harvey's jewels have attracted crowds to Hamlet's, where they have been reset in accordance with her ladyship's designs."

Another:—

"There was no symptom of nervousness in Sir Oswald Harvey's brilliant speech last night. We are rejoiced to announce that the honourable baronet has quite recovered from his indisposition, which was simply the result of over-exertion."

I was the cause of all this excitement; but I could not help it, Mary—I could not help it!"

Sir Oswald Harvey had become the popular man of his time. It was not the flimsy, silky popularity of a "fashionable speaker"—not the popularity that follows a man's footsteps and floats around him like a perfume, sweet and evanescent—it was admiration, respect, and that wonderful power over the affections of all who came within the sound of his voice. No one doubted Sir Oswald's integrity—no one questioned his motives. Old, grumbling, sturdy politicians—men hardened in their own opinions and practised in combat and contradiction, determined supporters of "measures, not men," who had looked the Speaker in the face for half a century, who pinned their faith to the past and had no faith in the future—felt strange and uncomfortable at being taken out of themselves—compelled to listen, and unable to reply, even when required to do so by the forms of the House.

Prosperous were the charities that could prevail upon him to preside at their annual dinners, where hands and knife-handles riot in applause over the "liberal donation" which is as nothing to the rich gift-giver, and pass in silence the pound of the poor man who can ill spare it. The richest and fairest in the land considered their *fête* crowned by the presence of Sir Oswald Harvey; it was believed that one of the most original and remarkable volumes—small in its number of pages, but marvellous in thought and originality—was from HIS pen; it was said at the clubs, that if Sir Oswald could be spared from the "Lower" he would be elevated to the "Upper" House. And all this came like successive flashes of lightning—there was no time to ask "How is it?" None. Never did a man achieve popularity so rapidly; and, according to report, Lady Harvey seemed content to play the part a good wife should—shining in borrowed light. She followed his footprints, and cared for no separate existence; those who could not comprehend *him*, appreciated her—her beauty, wit, and devotedness. Lawrence painted her portrait, and Russell Square was thronged by carriages of the fashionable world who went to see it! All the glasses at the Opera were levelled at her box; and there was a universal "buzz" round the House when she entered, as though she had been a crowned queen: still, if a stranger inquired who was it that eclipsed all other lights, the reply would not have been "Lady Harvey," but "the wife of Sir Oswald Harvey." If I chronicle my feelings truly, I was not jealous of this, I only thought of her then as I

did previously—as necessary to Sir Oswald's happiness. At times I could not see the injustice I had done her by placing her in a false position; I could only think what I would have given to be as she was. One year of such existence seemed to me worth a whole life's after-suffering; to know, to feel, that she was loved by him, *that* was first and greatest—then, to live alike in his sunshine and in his shadow—to feel that, amid the approbation of the whole world, it was only her praise that could make his heart beat, or send the flush of vital happiness to his pale cheek! But though I worked with treble my usual rapidity, and though each moment my boy grew more deeply into my heart, yet I could no longer repress the almost insane desire I cherished—to see Sir Oswald. If I could hear him speak only a few words, I believed they would satisfy me now and stimulate me for years. I thought of this again and again—I thought of little else. The session was nearly over. Not to hear his voice until another year was gone seemed to me as if I should be plunged in total darkness. I had stood for hours under the trees that overshadow that dim, dusky wall opposite the Grosvenor Place houses, just to see him pass to his carriage. I had mingled with the crowd that mob the Levees; but amid the princes and nobles of the land I only saw *one* face—not radiant, as I expected, with smiles and triumph, but earnest and careworn. How was it? What could have gathered over that brow? What pressure closed those eloquent lips so tightly? He *must* be happy. Had I not resigned my all in life to make him so? I was miserable—I had seen only, as it were, his statue; I panted to see the *soul* beam forth—to hear his voice. I determined I would hear it in the Senate-house,—that would content me. But how? How could I—an embroideress, gain admission to the Ventilator, where ladies of the highest rank jostled each other for “peeps” at the “English Cicero?” How could I accomplish my heart's desire? From the first moment I heard that my landlord was one of the doorkeepers, I resolved, as you have seen, to “bide my time,” and prevail on him to aid my design. But he was difficult to manage—very difficult; still, I clung to my purpose; were it right or wrong, I confess that, having once deliberately formed, I never relinquished, an object.

There are some men, the exercise of whose influence can only be bought by gold. Many are proof against it; but there are few who cannot be moulded as potter's clay by flattery. Of course I do not mean the broad-cast of compliments, the fulsome laudation, with which one speaker drenches another at public meetings. It has sometimes moved me to bitter indignation, even at religious gatherings, to listen to the flattery so steeped in oil that I thought all men must turn from it loathingly—actually giving to the creature the homage which only belonged to the Creator; and yet, men who were supposed to trample all the vanities of the world under their feet bowed to and accepted it with evident belief in its fitness. A delicately-minded man turns sick at such wholesale ovation; but, Mary, even the sensitive man is as open as the self-exalted

to its influence, if it be delicately applied. There are more dangerous flatteries than those that flow from the lip; a world of admiration may be conveyed by a bright and sudden smile—one well-directed phrase, a tender intonation of the voice, a look of delighted astonishment, will gratify the vanity of a true-born gentleman, who would reject a full-bodied public dinner-compliment as an insult. There are few men, and fewer women, who cannot be wooed and won to a purpose by judicious and tender flattery. The vanity of one is *not* the vanity of another—only, mark you, under some disguise or another, wherever there is not vanity there is pride; or where pride is not, there is vanity. Learn what is the most palatable sacrifice to the one or the other, and you can hold the man or woman within the palm of your hand. But few people, or few objects, are worth the sacrifice—a sacrifice that demands the relinquishing of all that is independent in yourself; yet there is one homage which all men specially value when rendered by our sex—the *homage of silence*. A good listener is far more popular with mankind in general than the most accomplished or most beautiful woman can hope to be. Extinguish self altogether, and LISTEN! No man can withstand that. A good listener—a good listener, my dear Mary, can always accomplish her purpose. A woman may carry any point, either with a wise man or a fool, if she will only listen; not listlessly—surely not—but with interest and attention.

I have poised the needle over my embroidery for ten minutes at a time to prove to my landlord how attentively I listened!

No matter how pre-engrossed by my baby, I listened to my landlord. I “listened” to the same stories over and over again, with what seemed to him unflagging interest. If half dead from the weariness of monotonous work, I brightened and “listened” to the most trivial tale of “the House.” He believed he had taught me to look upon “the House” as the portal to immortality.

I listened to all about that unfortunate man “The Speaker,” who was doomed to keep silence under the infliction of the greatest amount of nonsense as well as the highest displays of intellect. I sympathized with the Speaker; but I was the worst off of the two, for what I listened to was all nonsense—and nonsense done into bad English, which made it worse. How that man venerated THE SPEAKER! He had a curl of some bygone Speaker’s wig, which he preserved in what he called Lord Thurloe’s snuff-box; and he seemed to forget that he had shown it to me before, and presented it for my inspection, day after day, with a reverend air, as if he was unworthy to possess so rare a relic.

Of course, I endured all this for a purpose. I feared he might have opposed my wish, or suspected there was some mystery in my desire to hear Sir Oswald: any other man would; but he attributed it to my respect for “the House”—that was his absorbing idea. He provided me with the disguise that enabled me on such a night of excitement and confusion to pass in with the Reporters; but, unfortunately, the loss of

my hat while rushing out, created the sensation that you have seen proved a godsend to the newspapers. I know not how I escaped. I can never forget Sir Oswald's look of horror, nor the spring he made to seize me, as if he would have grasped a phantom. At one moment his fingers were on my arm; but I rushed wildly at the door and passed under more than one carriage, at the risk of my life. The mob, fortunately, were pre-occupied, watching for the exit of the great orator. "The people" appreciate and feel the spell of eloquence, and are easily led captive even by its echo. Were it more common it might be less powerful. At all events, it favoured my escape that they watched for him. Dizzy and bewildered, the thrill of his touch still vibrating through my frame, his presence seemed with me, guiding me to a less crowded locality. There I paused to recover breath; and the influence, or whatever illusion it was, seemed to pass down a dark street, where I feared to follow. At last I discovered that I was lost amid the labyrinths of Old Westminster. I had quitted the more intellectual for the debased crowd of barefaced sinners, drunken men and leering women—children smelling of gin, and literally clothed in dirt. I stumbled over the rugged pavement, and at last, thoroughly terrified and exhausted, I leaned against a pillar of the dilapidated doorway of an old-fashioned "gin-shop"—an edifice since replaced by the more attractive and far more dangerous "gin-palace."

"Is it out or in you're going?" inquired a rough voice, in an accent at that time quite new to me; "and is it boy or girl ye are, with your soft white face and silky hair, and your make-believe manishness? Where do you want to go at all? Save us! you look fairy-struck."

"I want to get to Chelsea!"

"To Chelsea, is it? Why then, God help you, what have you been after? But sure if you did tell me, it's a lie you'd tell, and so never heed it. Stay—I'll take ye a piece of the road, for, boy or girl, this is no place for ye, if ye're honest."

I can recall the tone of that voice at this moment. The speaker wore a man's battered hat over a handkerchief, that partially covered her grey hair—and a man's tattered coat over some remnants of woman's rags. She smelt abominably, and walked with a fearless swagger, elbowing her way and giving a word or a jest, which was quickly returned by those who evidently knew her. She was not drunk, poor wretch—nor was she sober. She turned round every half minute to ascertain if I followed closely, and to give me a word of advice. Her queer intonation and strong metaphors roused me; and the Pandemonium through which I passed was so horrible, that I would have taken refuge in a hackney coach if I could have seen one. I kept mentally questioning if those weird, haggard, fierce or despairing creatures were of the same flesh and blood as those I had seen in that august assembly—instinct with life, bright with intelligence. Was *this* world and *that* world the same? What a contrast! under the shadow of those grand old turrets of Westminster!

"You're not pleasant company, my dear," she said, making a sudden pause; "the five fields is lonesome, so you'd better take the lower Chelsea road, and don't be out this way again!"

I placed a few pence in her hand, and thanked her.

"You're kindly welcome, kindly," was the reply; "and so is any young creature, just for the sake of him I shall never see again."

"Your son?"

"That same."

"Dead?"

"Thru for you—dead."

"But you will meet again."

"Meet again!" she repeated, glaring on me like a wild beast, and shaking her tatters; "*me* meet my boy again! Why, he's in heaven, dear! In heaven, as sure as light is light—in *heaven!*—in heaven straight, without a taste of purgatory or a priest's prayer. What do you think of me now to have been *his mother*?—the mother of as good a boy as ever stepped in or out of shoe-leather? It's not aisy to believe—is it? only what troubles me is, I shall never, *never* see him, not if I suffered forty deaths. He's up there!—one of the stars, maybe; and he'll go higher and higher, while I go lower and lower. The last time I went to the priest I asked him, and he says it will take a thousand years in purgatory, maybe more, before I'm any way clean, let alone in a state for heaven. So I've no chance—never, *never* see my boy again! I know more than you think—a great deal more; and it sinks me. I know about the 'great gulf fixed.' It's not the drop of wather I'd ask for, to cool my tongue, for I know it deserves the burning; no, it's for one look of my child in glory."

She threw herself on a door-step in an agony, and from beneath the heap of rags came forth the wail—"One look of my child in glory!" The next instant she was having a stand-up fight with an old watchman who commanded her to "move on." I rushed towards home, and when I arrived—letting myself in to avoid the servant's observation, and overpowered by what I felt but could not define—I sobbed myself to sleep beside my child, just as the rising sun was triumphing over the grey dawn of morning.

XXIII.

THE incidents in this portion of my life were like a piece of mosaic, one atom fitting into another so as to make the whole complete, but each of little value in itself—atoms all!

I felt assured that Sir Oswald's delicate and nervous temperament must have been fearfully shattered by the likeness of the intruder to the departed woman; and I knew that scene would haunt him as a fearful vision for months to come. I remembered how acutely he suffered from an over-excited imagination at all times; and I, who had sacrificed my all, such as it was—but it *was* my all of happiness—to ensure his—I,

by my impotent curiosity, had troubled him at the very time when affection should soothe and lull the excitement produced by the inevitable wear and tear of public life.

Was I born to be the curse of what I loved? Strange as it may seem, my landlord was fortunately ignorant of my being the "Reporter" who had created such a turmoil. He was not on duty at the principal entrance, but told me the story the next day with great solemnity, believing that Sir Oswald Harvey's over-tasked brain had conjured up something—he knew not what. He slurred over the matter afterwards as detracting in some degree from the dignity of the House of Commons; and though I discovered the extracts you have read among the papers he brought home, they were not alluded to by him. The session drew rapidly to a close—the last speech was spoken, the last drawing-room over, the opera closed—and London, until after Christmas, obliterated from the map of the fashionable world. From every "house of business" extra hands were dismissed—to exist where they could, and how they could. God help those poor girls! Inoculated with a love of finery—trained to believe in "dress" as the one thing needful, and to witness every species of extravagance, *they* are expected to "dress" becomingly and support themselves in discretion and honour upon eighteen-pence a day—and "their tea!" while their employers take it for granted they continue in a state of virtuous indifference to the temptations and necessities of life, when deprived of every legitimate means of obtaining the "daily bread" there seems no loyal way of procuring for seven months out of twelve.

I knew more than one such, but one especially, at Mrs. Clary's—a girl of an impatient temper but affectionate heart; she used to come to me with messages from our employer, and during the season often brought my boy a little cheap toy, or an apple, or cake;—such gifts, however trifling, make the highway to a mother's heart. She told me there was an old grandmother nearly depending on her, but that at the end of "the season" she feared she must resign her to the workhouse—she could not lay by a farthing—she could barely exist. There were no needlewomen's societies then, to give even a stinted employment all the year round, bridging the chasm—vice and starvation on the one side, industry and protection on the other.* If I had invited her to help me, I must have displaced the

* I rejoice at an opportunity of drawing my reader's attention to the advantage of helping women, *who have not fallen*, to keep their good name by means of the employment offered at the "NEEDLEWOMAN'S SOCIETY." However small the remuneration, the employment is continuous—is not dependent upon the caprice of fashion, but on the actual needs of our fellow-beings. We want branch Societies from the parent tree, No. 2 in HIND STREET, to be established, not only in our Metropolitan districts—(I know one in Chelsea under the protection of the Rector and some good ladies)—but in our Provincial towns and larger villages. We want an increase to our Government contract—we can make tens of thousands of shirts, and of "every thing," if they will give them to us! We want our sailors and

poor girl I employed, who had done my bidding and served me faithfully, and who had not even the tie of an aged grandmother to firm her exertions.

Poor Sarah was, like all her class—fond of dress. If she had not been, she would not have suited Mrs. Clary. I saw a downward progress in her mind, and tried to check it.

"Why should she be worse off than others? Girls who kept right were not as well off as those who went wrong. What was a poor girl to do when the season was over? How could she go home to her grandmother and see her silently starving? She was trying for a lady's maid's place—but she was only a work-girl, and Mrs. Clary did not think her fit for it; she had no character—no one would take a needle-girl as a housemaid. God knew, she wished to do *right*."

"How did she manage last season?" "Oh, her father was alive then! Work-girls did very well if they had a parents' home to go to, and only their dress and a part of their food to find." I talked to, and comforted her, and did all I could to strengthen her; and she would stand before me, shake her head, and, while her great brown eyes filled with tears, repeat—"But it's very hard—it's very hard!"

"And so it was; but life has its hard lines to rich as well as poor; the season was not over yet; she was anticipating evil."

"No! she knew what was before her; everybody said the same."

"And who," I asked, "was her everybody?"

She flushed, and cast down her eyes, and as she left the room, said, "It was no good talking; she could not see her grandmother starve"—sheltering, poor girl, vice beneath the shadow of virtue. Her "everybody," I saw, was some particular ill-adviser. There are always serpents to tempt Eves!

Sarah did not bring the next message. In answer to my inquiry I was told Mrs. Clary had dismissed her four weeks before the end of the

soldiers to have all their "inner garments" made at "the Needlewomen's Societies." We can do all the plain work for all the *trousseaux* of all the brides in England. We can furnish no end of "baby baskets." We can do household work neater and better than the householders, and, if their time is of value, cheaper. Will ladies come and judge for themselves? Will they visit us? Will they help us to keep our human sisters pure by permitting them to earn their "bit of bread" by the labour of honest hands? It is all they ask—it is all we ask for them! The winter is already with us, but *work* will warm it; provisions are dear—*work* will procure them; they for whom we plead live in an atmosphere of moral danger—*work* will purify it. It seems so hard to earnestly seek employment, and to be told there is none, when we know there is plenty, if it were only thrown into the right channel! No job of work is too small, no quantity too large for our performance. REFORMATORIES are good—but PROTECTION is better. If it be a truism that "Prevention is better than cure," surely it is so here! Help us, ladies! sisters of the truest charity! Help us with your influence—help us by your presence—help us with WORK for our WORKERS!—A. M. H.

season; "they were all very fond of her, but feared she would come to no good." That did not satisfy me. I went to her grandmother's lodging.

The old woman was sitting up, palsied as she had been for years, but cheerful and thankful.

"She had such a good grand-daughter; she lived altogether at Mrs. Clary's now, and gave her such nice things; and that warm shawl—and this—and this." The poor creature believed her doing so well—I could not steep the few remaining days of her life in the bitterness of truth. I left my name on a slip of paper.

The girl came to me that night "in silken sheen," and with tinted cheeks. She tried to brave it out, at first; but I spoke to her heart and roused her best feelings, and all she did then was to weep and entreat me not to embitter her grandmother's last hours. "The hardest things she had to bear were *her* praise and prayers. She would starve sooner than touch what she gave her, if she knew all; but it was so hard to hear her praise her, and know what she knew of herself; it was *so* hard. She—the old, palsied woman—would curse her if she knew all. She had never thought of *that*, until it was too late—too late! Ah, field-work was better for poor girls, and household service far better, than uncertain work in the midst of London temptations—fine dress, and scant food, and a desire to look as well as others:—poverty and hunger on the one side, and a light that shone like pleasure on the other; but if I told her grandmother, she would curse her."

I went to Mrs. Clary. She could do nothing except send me to good true people who would have saved her, and who had saved scores of her class; and I went freighted with a promise from one noble lady (who knew the temptations they were subject to, and remembered both their weakness and their ignorance) that she would provide for her grandmother if Sarah would come to the shelter and protection she offered. I went with a sobered joy—but still it was thankfulness and joy—to the old woman's lodging, to leave a note for Sarah—but I was too late! Some coarse person had followed the unfortunate girl into the presence of her grandmother, and in that presence reproached her for what she was. Slow to comprehend evil of her darling—the very light of her old eyes—it required stronger words, in louder tones, to destroy her faith in her grandchild; but the accusation was repeated, and facts brought to prove it.

They entered into the old, believing, Christian heart. She would not permit Sarah to remain in the room; she refused food—and the last act of her life was shredding the clothes Sarah had given her with her trembling fingers, and letting them drop bit by bit on the floor—and so she died!

I never saw the poor girl again—but Mrs. Clary told me she threw herself into the Thames not long after.

Ay, Mary! another page of the old, old story.

The West-end Houses within their closed shutters were all "done up"

in brown holland; and if man or woman of decided fashion *were* called to town by business, the strictest *incog.* was preserved, and it would have been an insult to their position to recognize them. Even the street-sweepers had gone to Margate for quiet and change of air.

The public "Charities" and "Missions" subsisted calmly until "next season," upon the proceeds of their public "dinners" and "appeals." Bazaars had not yet harmonized charity and display under the banners of the fairest—and sometimes the vainest—of the daughters of England; and actors and actresses, singers and singeresses, who had hardly been heard of in London, were shining as "bright particular stars" among the rural and manufacturing populations of our crowded island. People had gone out of town in stage coaches, or large lumbering carriages, and any one who could have believed in gas or steam, in those far-away days, would have been considered more than slightly insane.

I gathered all my news of the world from Mrs. Clary,—to my landlord the world had no news save that of "the House;"—during the recess he was annihilated—he had no existence when "the House was up."

Nothing degrades the domestic character of England so entirely as permitting the world to see its interior arrangements; it is such a pity also that people who cater for public amusement will not remember that the public care for the amusement—not for the amuser; and that if they have a desire connected with the person, it is simply the result of vulgar curiosity. But when a man proves to the world that he has quarrelled with his wife, he falls to the level of the shoemaker, or tailor, whose "Missus had him up" for ill-treatment. The case may be reversed; but an ill-treated man is sure to be held in contempt. What fallen angels prompted the establishment of a Divorce Court, to set married people thinking, not what it was they could bear, but what it was they could *not* bear? I often wonder what the workroom women say about it. At the time of which I now write, their sympathies went to Queen Caroline! One of the present dresses, my Mary, would be ample for four of the ordinary narrow robes in which that poor betrayed Queen Caroline received the fag-ends of man and woman-kind, who, from warm hearts, or party spirit, and in defiance of time and weather, crowded to the Receptions of a brave, though ill-judging and evil-intreated, daughter of the House of Brunswick. Mrs. Clary being a "Court dress-maker," could not take her part, and refused to make the "Caroline hat," which generally indicated the political tendency of the fair wearer. I saw her once—that poor, hard-fated Queen!—looking like a full-blown rose that had been crushed under foot, and then picked up and cared for; but its purity and freshness were gone—it was soiled and tattered; arrange it—tend it as you would—its very being a Rose made you turn from it with a painful sensation, seeing what even a rose may come to.

I had still some trimmings on hand; but I was quite prepared for Mrs. Clary's question: "Had I any novelty to propose for next season?"

Painted velvet and chenille had enjoyed a wonderful popularity in the *beau monde*. But what novelty had I in preparation, or even in thought, for next season? People absolutely spoke of wearing skirts full all round. Odious as it was, such a change was possible, and of course those heavy embroideries could not be worn; besides, they were *done*. No fashion outlives a season." Mrs. Clary urged me to live with her; she intended to flatter me by the assurance that I should be useful in the show-room. I had "a Marie Stuart face," she said, "and the Marie Stuart cap and ruff were whispered about—spoken of as 'possible.' My style was good. She had a difficulty in finding a young person for the show-room who moved and spoke like a lady; a little 'humility' she suggested, blended with my natural dignity, would be very attractive. I could go to my child at night." I was angry with myself for feeling indignant at what was intended to be complimentary and kind. She proceeded to fix my salary, while I was endeavouring to find words sufficiently tame to express my thanks and my refusal. When a milliner compliments your personal appearance, in the belief that your face is valuable to her bonnets, you may credit her sincerity; and I really think Mrs. Clary believed she was making my fortune. Like the generality of women, her mind turned upon matrimony as on a pivot; they never feel the degradation of such speculations. Every girl, or even widow, with a pretty face or engaging person, is certain to be set down by some benevolently-minded match-maker as just suited to Mr. A, B, or C, and the meeting is thought of and mentally arranged for with much self-gratification. When I refused, she told me I was very foolish. "She herself married from a show-room!" God help her! Piqued though she was at my refusal to become an animated lay figure, her good nature overcame her displeasure. "What did I intend to do?"

"Anything!"

"That was very vague. Could I embroider in white?"

"Yes; I should like to give lessons in the morning and embroider at night. I could teach English, Italian, and velvet-painting."

"Would I take a village school? One of 'her ladies' had been inquiring for a young person capable of instructing in a school she had established on her own estate for the children of her tenants and dependants—a charming lady—one of her best customers—worth three hundred a year to her at least. A widow she believed—at least she never heard of a husband, though of course one might be still alive—it was hard to say—gentlemen seldom came to show-rooms except with their brides. Such taste she had!"

How could I go to the country? I lived on in the hope of seeing HIM next session; of hearing HIM. Surely, I could find means of subsistence in this mighty London, even during the dead season. I had saved—oh yes! I had saved more than double what I had expended; but I must reserve and add to that for my child's sake. All this flew

rapidly, as thoughts will fly, through the brain. I told Mrs. Clary I preferred remaining in London. She opened still more circingly her great round eyes, and told me very truly that I knew nothing of the slackness of employment in the out-of-season time. It was a pity, if I had any idea of teaching, I did not think of the school. It was quite a "fancy school" and only one lady to please—not as if I had, she said smilingly, a feminine board-of-green-cloth to deal with—and it was near town.

"How near?"

"Somewhere between Richmond and Twickenham—seven or eight miles. She would give me some of her embroideries to do there if I liked—if I had leisure."

That altered the case. Seven or eight miles! Better air for my child, and the power of visiting town when I pleased.

I thanked Mrs. Clary, and said I would consider about it.

She replied, "there was little time to consider. Mrs. Stanley never waited for any thing, or any one; if she did not find a school teacher at once she would make one."

"Make a teacher?"

"Oh, that was nothing to Mrs. Stanley. She *was* so clever, she would make a teacher out of her own maid or one of the tenant's daughters. Make them rehearse at night what they had to do in the morning, provided they had voices—if I had a good voice I must succeed; indeed, Mrs. Clary almost feared, as she had seen Mrs. Stanley yesterday morning, that by this time the situation was filled. The lady was so fond of that school—she was such a philanthropist—it was her pet hobby—no harm." Mrs. Clary suggested if I took the coach at the White Horse Cellar I could be there soon after two. She was a kind creature, good Mrs. Clary. She made me take a cup of French chocolate, and offered me her purse. "I might not," she said, "have brought mine with me." And then she put on me a Marie Stuart cap, composed of pink and white silver-paper, and sighed at my want of taste in preferring the duties of a village school to being clothed in purple and fine linen in her show-room.

XXIV.

HEART nor eye could desire nothing more lovely than the situation and arrangement of "The Lawn," as Mrs. Stanley's residence was called, in the "Vale of the Thames;" but the house stood considerably above the level of the "royal stream," the lawn descending in gentle slope to meet the water. The entrance-gates were protected by two Lodges, embowered by every variety of creeper; the drive was so closed in by evergreens, that it was not until you turned an angle that the dwelling and its "setting" shone before you. The house had evidently been added to from time to time, and was made up of turrets and gables, and an old belfry, and lancet-shaped windows, and a delicious conservatory, terminated by a projecting

music-room with a bow window, that took in a most beautiful "reach" of the river. The buildings, so dissimilar yet so combined, might have looked incongruous if they had not been so overgrown by luxurious climbing plants.

The lady paramount of this lovely scene of lawn, and trees, and river, of which Richmond Hill formed the foliaged background, was one of those fantastic specimens of philanthropy which it is far more easy to imagine than describe. She was enthusiastic in all things, practical in nothing—she wished the children (girls) to enter school to the sound of sweet music, as she said, to "harmonize their feelings," and instead of sitting at my desk to receive them, I was to sing, as, having been first placed rank and file in the outward porch by a monitor, they entered two and two, filing off, poor little things, to their appointed places. The lady was about your size, my Mary, delicately formed, and with that natural turn for affectation—or what is considered so—that belongs to a weak but highly sensitive organization. It was not difficult to see that her whims were stronger than her reason. I often thought, afterwards, that I could have better borne with a capricious nature than endured the obstinacy with which she adhered to whatever she fixed upon as right. She would have made a pretty picture in that gorgeously littered room, bending over her harp, and now and then striking a chord to accompany the moaning sort of chant with which she desired to *harmonize* the feelings of my future pupils as they entered school. Her voice was peculiarly low and sweet—the whisper of an ordinary voice. Looking up literally through the masses of shiny yellow hair, which had fallen over her cheeks and brow, she asked if I could manage so much music as that? There was nothing to manage. I endeavoured to keep down my voice; but it would fill the room, and my patroness started up with an exclamation expressive of delight and astonishment—"Such a voice! Where did it come from? Where had it been cultivated?" In her delight at my voice and its training, she for a moment forgot her school; but as her plan was to educate the world by the influence of sweet sounds, she quickly returned to her object, and became more than usually eloquent in her explanations. Of course it was my duty, if I accepted the situation she offered, to receive her instructions, though I did not comprehend the advantage of tripping over the alphabet to dance music, or chanting the responses to the Church Catechism; but there is something so inexpressibly sweet in the sound of young voices, either in speaking or singing, that I rather liked the idea of such employment. When I found she was preparing to question me on my former life, I volunteered to inform her that, if she took me at all, she *must* take me on trust—that I could not answer questions, but would solemnly assure her that I was an honest, honourable, married woman, fully capable of undertaking all she required.

She believed me; and after a little time I was engaged to superintend her school, on musical principles, at a salary of forty pounds a year,

including residence. And such a bird's nest of a residence it was! Two rooms at the end of the school, and the entire of the loft over the whole—such a play-room for my boy! Had the school been in course of construction now, she would have inclined to the Gothic, and the school-room would doubtless have been properly constructed to the glorification of the architect, and the exclusion of light and air—its cheerful sunny aspect rendered gloomy and austere by narrow windows and painted glass. As it was, the room, if not lofty, was very long; and as windows to open and shut were at both sides, the ventilation was excellent. The outer walls were covered by those luxuriant climbers that flourish to perfection in the Vale of the Thames—roses and woodbines dared to press against the casements, and every variety of clematis and Virginia creeper flung their web-like tendrils across the panes. A square piano occupied the place of honour usually appropriated to the teacher's desk, at the top of the school-room, while the desk sulked in the nearest corner. I endeavoured to steal bits of utility into this "system," and even favoured those who had "no ear," without which Mrs. Stanley believed they had better never have been born. How she delighted to see them enter to "slow music," and then take their places while singing the Morning Hymn! Then came the musical alphabet for the little ones, and harmonized spelling and arithmetic for the elders; the samplers got on under the influence of "In my Cottage near a Wood," and back-stitch progressed to a bit out of "Tancredi," and all the time Mrs. Stanley believed she was training up those girls to become good cottagers' wives and excellent domestic servants. Do not laugh so contemptuously at this, my dear Mary. There are many philanthropists in this our present day who are just as visionary in their plans and systems of "amelioration" and "education" as was Mrs. Stanley. I do not think that *crochet* fits a girl a bit more to be a husbandman's wife, or a good "family" cook, than singing in tune. The culture of our girls, high and low, despite their classes and colleges, their medals and scholarships, is deplorably wanting in the element that fits woman for her *duties*—for the thinking and calculating business of domestic existence—for the looking forward as well as upward that renders her so valuable for the worldly as well as the spiritual progress of life—ay, deplorably wanting in any distinct knowledge of that "self-help" which, when necessary, can be resorted to by women of all classes, to lighten their own wayside burdens, and help them to bear the burdens of those far dearer to them than life itself.

It seems to me that we have been for some time astray on educational matters. The Mechanics' Institutes throughout the country, that were to "intellectualize" and protect our young men from evil company, are every where in a state of bankruptcy, and our national education is tacitly acknowledged to be so ineffective, that I have lately heard wise men debating whether we might not venture on the Prussian system, and coerce the people to educate their children. But this has to do with England's

future, not with my past; and I will not now weary you, dear Mary, on a theme concerning which I could write a volume.

For some little time I enjoyed more tranquillity in my bower of youth and roses than I had dared to hope for or anticipate. I was so netted around by life, it was such a change from the monotony of my needle, which always gave me time for thought, that a healthier current flowed through my veins, though my skeleton, clothed as it was in its almost divine beauty, was ever with me; yet the blessed influence that childhood exercises over us, harmonized me, while I was directed in my duty to harmonize others. Mrs. Stanley, fortunately, had resolved not to "show off" her pupils until they had attained a degree of excellence that would at once overthrow the Rector's opposition to the lady's "system." He had refused to let them sing in church, because of its "vain display." I forgot to tell you that there *was* a Mr. Stanley, though few people seemed to take into consideration the fact of his existence; he looked after the children—four—who, being wholly "without ear," were their mother's great and terrible affliction. She never mentioned them without sighs and tears, and wondered how they could be *her* children. Well, their father looked after them with all a mother's tenderness, and rolled the lawn after summer showers. I heard he was very scientific, and he always looked kind and gentle—a long, lean man. I never saw him in the school but once, when he brought my little boy in on his shoulder, and very gravely inquired if I intended such a boy as that for a fiddler? Once Mrs. Stanley invited some friends from London, and sent for me to sing to them. I refused;—she was very angry. I told her she had engaged me as the mistress of her school, not as a concert singer, and that if I failed to give her satisfaction I would leave, but I would not be made a show of.

She hinted I was not what I seemed. I replied, I had never said I was, and stood holding my little boy's hand, expecting my dismissal; but she left my room without another word.

During the next session I went up to town more than once, though but once I heard Sir Oswald address a public meeting. While men shouted and tossed their hats in the air, and women alternately wept and shook their handkerchiefs, I gathered myself together in a dark corner and trembled. I could neither weep nor cry out. There was a great rush, as usual, to see *him* get into his carriage, but it had driven off before I could descend the steps. SHE seemed to have passed out of the public mind—simply, I suppose, because she was not constantly doing some thing to excite attention. But I heard a rumour which, for a time, made me so ill that I was some days without being able to attend to my duties, and I shrank from my child's caresses. If *that* was true, I *must* stand forth, and destroy, with my own breath, the air-castle I had erected. My child's eyes seemed to follow me reproachfully. There were moments when I could not look at him. I devoured a small portion of the *Morning Post* daily. At last I saw it—

"On Thursday, at Brecken Hall, the residence of Sir Oswald Harvey, Lady Harvey, of a daughter, *still born*."

I suppose I had always an instinctive habit of observation. I never tried to observe, but I saw things and read characters quickly; and after all, life in a village is only the miniature life of a city. No doubt I excited a good deal of curiosity; and Mrs. Stanley, who delighted in mystery, fostered it. My boy was the plaything and delight of the school, but, with the exception of music, received other impressions slowly. He inherited his father's impetuous nature, and was impatient of control. His memory was, however, strongly retentive; and he evidently pondered over, to retain, much of what he saw and heard. He had an innate boldness as if conscious of his birthright, mingled with a sort of suppressed pride as if he knew by instinct that he was subjected to a wrong. You may comprehend my feelings when continually noting these phases in his gradually-developing character. Sometimes I felt almost forced into a belief that my secret was known to him; and then, what intense agony I endured! All my devotion to him, to strengthen his mind and mature his natural powers, seemed but a poor compensation for the gifts and rights of which I had deprived him.

Even then, dear Mary, I was perpetually asking myself the question—"Can wrong be right?" And the answer of heart, mind, and conscience was ever the same—"Never!"

Mrs. Stanley, foiled in her desire to exhibit my voice, delighted in showing off the "infant Mozart," as she would call him, to her friends. Even while the keys of the piano were almost beyond the reach of his little fingers, he would play any music that was sung to him, or that he had heard, picking out the notes with one finger, and as he grew older, finding out harmonies, he would strike a chord, and look up with eyes humid with delight; if he unfortunately sounded a discord, it would send a positive shudder through his little frame. I endeavoured to restrain this music mania, but in vain; the passion was as the pulse of his existence. Mr. Stanley's observation that "it would be a pity to make such a boy as that a fiddler," often struck upon my heart; and instead of receiving as a great boon the gift of the only *earthly* enjoyment we are taught to expect in Heaven—even with the memory of how his father delighted in noble music—I often and often bore him from the piano, and left him sobbing on his little bed. My boy darling!—he was gaining more and more space in my heart—another idol—smaller and weaker than the first, but still an idol—the two were growing into one. During his infancy, now in his early childhood, I was all to him, but the time was fast coming when his education and his temper would require a father's care and control. I still laboured nightly to acquire what *tutors* only are believed to be capable of teaching—but what of that?

Mrs. Stanley's neighbours were certainly not harmonized towards her

school; the Rector called her "system" a mass of absurdity and display. Such children as were not directly under Mrs. Stanley's influence were withdrawn. The blacksmith's wife, a stout, strong-minded woman, who, in her husband's absence, could shoe a horse, and declared she could swing a hammer "as well as any *he* in England," had the daring to set her opinion up against "Madam Stanley," and called the pretty school the "Squalling College." Of course, Mrs. Stanley sent her horses to be shod at Kingston—and this made matters worse. The blacksmith and his wife both retorted that they only repeated "what Parson said." But this breach had the one good effect of making them go to church twice every Sunday—they resolved to "stand by Parson," and Mrs. Stanley determined to support her system while a girl remained in the school. Three maiden ladies of good fortune were believed to have a great deal of local influence, and Mrs. Stanley relied very much upon their attachment to her in this divided matter. They resided at a lovely place named "The Willows," and the small satire of the village called the sisters "the Three Willows." I thought of them as the Misses Flexible, belonging to that undulating class of women who agree with everything and everybody; who, without intending to be false, have never the self-reliance or the moral courage to be true. They were all afflicted with different degrees of by no means an uncommon weakness—*love of approbation*—which, of all our moral weaknesses, most surely undermines all dignity and singleness of purpose—all simplicity and purity of character. They praised every thing, because they wanted every thing to praise them. There was nothing ever done that they had not thought of doing. They trumpeted each other's sayings and charities, and were too well satisfied with themselves to be dissatisfied with any thing. They were always insinuating how they had helped *this* person, and pushed on the other—they were three gigantic I's. Miss Bess and Miss Maud, and simpering Miss Fanny, were, in fact, one and the same: they would rather hear the clap-hand of a fool than the kindest reproof that could fall from the lips of a friend. Mrs. Stanley was the reverse of all this. Now a-days (if being lovely and graceful did not incapacitate) she might have held the brevet-rank of a "strong-minded woman." I could hardly understand how she endured their personal pronouns and their insincerity. They were a trio of weathercocks, and yet resentful of any slight to their imaginary superiority. They received compliments as Cæsar did his tribute-money, and with as little gratitude. They would come into the schoolroom with a toe-tripping gait, and tell me how they had given this and that away, and done this or the other good action. Such persons have no conception of doing right for the sake of right—no care for the glory of doing good "that grace may abound"—no idea of the honour of being silent labourers in their Lord's vineyard—no standard, indeed, but their pitiful sapless selves. Beware, my Mary, of those whom phrenologists say have "large

love of approbation." Their good deeds are all illegitimate children, who can have no sound heritage among us. I could not bear them. Whenever they visited the school, they nodded their three heads in time to the music, and murmured "bravo," "sweet," "delicious," "charming," in every soft variety of tone. They always, in a sort of friendly trio, called Mrs. Stanley "Harmony;" assured her she was "a tender blessing," and elated her exceedingly by taking her best "*mezzo soprano*" from the school, as under-housemaid. How Mrs. Stanley for ten whole days did exult over that removal! She told it to every one, she wrote it to every one—such a proof of the excellence of "her system!" But, alas! the reaction came. Esther was altogether deficient in housemaid requirements—as I knew she would be. She could take the second in the multiplication-table to perfection, but she could not cast up a washing-bill; and then, she "had such a passion for slut holes." She sang "*Dulce Domum*," the song of the season, like an angel, yet she was ever running out "on the sly," to the daughter of the *public-house*, who had been Mrs. Stanley's favourite "*contralto*," until she found her father exacted pennies for her singing. Poor child. She was a painful proof of the mistake of attempting to cultivate a plant in a wrong soil. I told Mrs. Stanley she was a miserable needlewoman; and Mrs. Stanley said, in reply, "she would be sure to improve—she had an inquiring mind." She gave a sad proof of this, by inserting a knife into a Spanish guitar, a great favourite at "The Willows," to see what was in its inside! The Willows, after this failure, were absolutely seen by Mrs. Stanley at the gate of the Rectory, leaving cards. It is true they nodded their heads more than ever the next time they came to see us; but the spell was broken. My little Mistress was cold, and stiff, and stately; she could throw a great deal of dignity around her little person when she pleased, and she was at all events perfectly sincere. That was their last visit. They went completely over to the opposite party.

The clergyman made overtures of amalgamation, which greatly excited the indignation of the blacksmith's wife, who charged him with it, arms a kimbo, as he passed the forge. He was an honest, good Christian, and spoke words of peace that hissed upon her hot-iron nature like drops of water on a glowing anvil. She had got over the taxgatherer, the two haberdashers—(Mrs. Stanley purchased all her "soft goods" in London or Windsor, even to the school pin-befores)—and the baker; and she threatened the clergyman with her "faction," or with turning Methodist. "More strange things might come to pass than 'the people's' setting up a school for their own children, far and away from Squires or Parsons. She meant neither wrong nor rudeness; but Salem Chapel wasn't far off, and many talked of the preacher's 'gifts.'"

We had, of course, one or two energetic neighbours, who, rather than fall into a calm, would propose anything or oppose anything. We had our enterprising spirits; and one glorious woman, a Mrs. Dunbar, a ruined

gentlewoman as far as money was concerned, but the crowning blessing of the parish—always found beside the sickest bed and by the poorest hearth, fearing no moral or bodily pestilence—wearing no cap or hooded badge to tell the world of her self-sacrifice—neatly and carefully dressed according to her means—looking as if patience was her joy, and sick-nursing her delight—a brave, true woman, ever ready to serve and wait, making her way on earth the way to heaven! I owe that dear woman's memory a churchful of monuments! This good lady was an unswerving tower of strength to our poor cottagers, some of whom were cold, careless, and ignorant; others anxious, patient and prayerful; the poor helping the poor, and the *godly* striving earnestly, but not always wisely, to make others think in all things exactly as they did, and sometimes stumbling over straws, as if they were obstacles to salvation.

My employer, as you know, considered music the great educator. Her husband gave the same place to mineralogy. His brother, Mr. Ferdinand Stanley, was a singular contrast to Mr. Stanley of the Lawn. In his straw hat, white waistcoat, and nankeen jacket and trousers—(his favourite morning costume)—he would, with the assistance of a pipe and tabor, have been the very model of an Arcadian shepherd. He was such a mild-eyed, pink-faced, innocent-looking man; so small and agile, floating here and flitting there, standing on one leg and pirouetting, to the great indignation of his scientific brother, and the ill-concealed contempt of his sister-in-law. And yet he had an educational theory of his own. Dancing, he contended, in a thin, lisping voice, ought to be made the basis of education. Harmony of motion would, sooner or later, regenerate our social system—children should be taught to dance before they could walk. Nothing like dancing to reform the lower classes of society; instead of meeting to drink, old and young should assemble round the Maypole, and our rural districts become positive Arcadias: there would then be an end to every species of vicious dissipation. If his system were adopted (as in time, when the world became more rational, he had no doubt it must be), babies would come dancing into the world, and old age go dancing out of it! He was very innocent and very harmless, and greatly in favour with all the young children of my school, whom he used to teach to dance, rewarding them with gilt gingerbread husbands and wives, which were the *bon-bons* of those days. But, as the villagers said, Mr. Ferdinand “took a turn,” and determined to go as a Missionary to some benighted island, and we saw him no more.

It is not to be disputed that, in the country, people ride their hobbies more furiously than they do in large cities; they get into the way of attaching great importance to small things—and it may be well when they do so, for anything is preferable to stagnation. Mrs. Stanley still decided to keep to “her system” as long as a child remained in the school, and her kindness to me never wavered. She commanded herself, rather than give me pain.

Another winter had come, and was nearly gone, when two of my little pupils came to school weary and heavy-eyed, and with so much fever about them that I took them home myself. Their mothers thought it was measles. I did not fear the measles for my boy; with his fine constitution the measles could not harm him. Another child, the same day, when day was concealing its fading glories under the shadows of evening, became ill—worse than the others. She was a brave little thing, and declared she was not so bad but that she could “do” her work. As I was leading her towards her home, I met the village Doctor—and he, too, like my never-to-be-forgotten friend Dr. Ridge, was a man you felt at once was your good friend. Of course, he looked at her tongue, felt her pulse, and then, opening her eyelids, examined her eyes. He took hold of her other hand, and so the child walked between us.

“It is measles, Doctor,” I said, confidently.

“Is it?” was his reply. My heart began to beat rapidly.

“Surely it is not scarlatina?”

“I think not.”

“Then what is it, Doctor?”

“I shall be able to tell you to-morrow. Two others you say attacked in the same way? They must all be put to bed and kept warm. I will myself go to the cottages. Poor little dears!”

He changed the subject; spoke of other matters; then asked after my boy; talked of various things again; then said he had taken some fine vaccine matter that morning, and if I liked he would vaccinate his young friend—or *me*.

Then I knew the children had neither measles nor scarlatina. In positive terror I dropped the little creature’s hand, and fixed my eyes upon the Doctor’s face. He understood my question, though I could not give it voice.

“I fear it is so,” he said; “it is raging at Richmond and Kingston, and may cross the river. But, as your boy has been vaccinated, if he does catch it, it will be very slight indeed—and it could do *you* no harm either to have vaccination repeated; there can be no danger; remember, the sure way to catch an infection is to fear it.”

We were both vaccinated that night; but the next morning we both, my child and I, gave evidence that we had caught the small-pox.

THE SOVEREIGN'S MESSENGER.

BY "THE MAN WITH THE BLACK BAG."

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

As I write these lines, my open window looks over a wood-clad valley on the calm waters of the Bosphorus. All Nature is at rest. It is early autumn time, perhaps the most lovely season in the East. The deep blue ocean is as placid as a mirror; not the slightest breeze stirs the woodlands; Nature, in fact, appears to sleep in peace, as if man were not warring now, and had never warred, beyond the limits of these peaceful mountain slopes. And yet, how few years since the bright waters on which I look, not very far away in the landscape, dividing by a narrow channel European Turkey from Asia, conveyed on their bosom thousands of brave and beating hearts, never to revisit their fatherland! Alas! what memories rush across my mind of friends and pleasures gone for ever!

My faithful Black Bag rests by my side—sole companion of my travels during many years across the burning plains of Castile, over the snow-clad wastes of Russia, on the uncertain seas of the Baltic and the Mediterranean, amid the fertile and luxuriant vales of Italy and France, through Germany, Russia, Poland,—ay, even to the Athenian shores, across the *Ægean* to the waters of the Black Sea. Could it only speak, how many a tale it could tell; while I, ungrateful as I am, can only thank it for the tender care of my humble notes, which, from time to time, I extract from the budget that year after year is hidden in its recesses.

Let me do so now, and try if they will aid me to bring back the past in all its freshness, thus enabling me to sketch scenes faithfully which I had all but forgotten—so rapid is the advance of time to one ever on the move. And yet, returning to them, how clearly they loom forth as if they occurred but yesterday, though my bag and I have wandered many thousand leagues since, and if God will it, may wander onwards still.

It was late in October—the very close, in fact, of that oft-times beautiful autumnal month—when I chanced to ramble alone, far away from the scene where I now write, in the Tier Garden (literally speaking, Deer Forest,) which combines so many charms for the inhabitants of Berlin—shady during Midsummer's heat, dry during Winter's cold,—the resort of all—princes and kings, rich and poor, the cheerful as the sad—who inhabit that dull but beautiful city. It was one of those exhilarating afternoons which enable us to glide imperceptibly as it were from Summer into Winter—the sun still retaining heat, the vault of heaven blue and cloudless—yet the fallen leaves had clustered on the pathways, and the nightingales had long ceased to sing—that I sat down on one of the numerous rustic seats, side by side with a stranger whom I soon discovered to be a countryman.

Observing that he was smoking—(who does not smoke, in Berlin?)—I also drew forth my cigar-case. Having courteously asked him for a light, we entered into conversation. And as to him, far more than to any thing which may have happened to myself, I am indebted for what may occur in these pages, I may be permitted briefly to describe him :—

He might have been eight-and-thirty years of age; slight, but active in person; bright and intelligent in countenance, with frank and agreeable manners: and I may further name, that this casual meeting secured to me, subsequently, a firm friend—such are the every-day events of life.

My first remark, as far as I can recollect, after seeing that my cigar was well lighted, ran thus :—“ I regret finding myself here so late in the season. A few years since I visited the Tier Garden, about Midsummer time, when the whole woodlands appeared to be alive with the delicious notes of the nightingale.”

“ It was so,” he replied; “ but, alas! the commercial spirit of the age would not allow the public to enjoy such unrivalled music without paying for it; and so all the boys at Berlin started a trade in nightingales—they robbed the nests, and sold the young birds. Thus, for a period, the nightingales disappeared from the forest, whereas in all parts of the city might be seen nightingales in cages. The Berlin authorities, however, or possibly the public, are fond of sweet music in the woodlands; and thus, inquiries having been instituted as to the sudden disappearance from the Tier Garden of these melodious songsters, the fact was discovered, since which a tax of ten thalers, or about thirty shillings, per annum, has been imposed on all who keep caged nightingales—a heavy tax for a Berliner; moreover, the boys, when caught by the foresters, are punished—so the nightingales are coming back again.”

“ I am heartily glad to hear it,” I replied.

“ And so am I,” added my companion; “ and most sincerely do I wish the Russian Government would impose a similar tax on all drunken Russian postilions.”

I own, for the moment I felt somewhat at a loss to conceive what possible connection the nightingales in the Tier Garden, in Berlin, had with drunken Russian postilions; but the sequel cleared the matter up: moreover, it caused an event in my life which at the moment I certainly did not anticipate, but have never regretted—I went to Warsaw and St. Petersburg.

“ It has simply this connection,” continued Colonel Crampton (for such was his name): “ I start for St. Petersburg to-morrow night, *viâ* Warsaw, and as the season is advancing, I am by no means desirous to encounter any of the mishaps not seldom accruing from ‘ Racci,’* and Russian postilions. Better to tax them for being drunk, they would then have no money to drink with in future.”

* An unwholesome fiery Russian spirit—a mixture, in fact, of turpentine and bad brandy.

Now, there is a certain freemasonry between military men, naval men, and sportsmen, unexplainable but actual, which causes the acquaintance of the hour not seldom to ripen as it were into an intimacy, and thus, when we parted for our different hotels, having nothing to occupy me particularly for a month, I had so far given way to Colonel Crampton's pressing wish that I should have a run with him, as he called it, to the City of the Czar and back—which, by the bye, he mentioned as if we were merely going to dine at the "Star and Garter," at Richmond—that I agreed to breakfast with him on the following morning, and give him a decided answer—which I did in favour of going; and that night saw us fairly off by railway to Warsaw.

Ere I say more, however, it may not be without interest to the travelling world that I remark briefly on the subject of our route. But few years have elapsed—indeed, scarcely one—since a journey to the Russian capital from old England, whether in mid-summer or mid-winter time, was always one of great fatigue—generally one of hardships, not unaccompanied with danger; in fact, an undertaking that few would encounter, save from absolute duty or necessity. The progress of railways—and increased northern civilization, if you will have it—have, however, materially altered and greatly alleviated all difficulties; and he who travels by the direct road, *via* Berlin, to the Prussian frontier and Königsberg, will find a railway to Kovno—thence (weather, of course, permitting) a good posting highway of about 100 miles (nothing in Russia) to Dunaborgh, where another railway glides you to St. Petersburg; a journey, in fact, which may be performed in or about four days and nights, without any considerable risk, great fatigue, or inconvenience.

It is not precisely the same *via* Warsaw. It is true there is a railway to that unhappy city from Berlin—a transit of twenty-four hours; but from thence there is none, as yet at least, though one will soon be completed.

Having crossed the Vistula, one only of the four rivers which intercept your route, and which, save in summer or mid-winter, when it is converted into an ice-bound highway, is both dangerous and difficult of passage, you have nothing before you but four hundred and fifty versts, or about 400 miles, of the most uninteresting, tedious, and insupportable roads that he who lives in the land of MacAdam can imagine. This was our line; and to Colonel Crampton alone am I indebted that he made it, notwithstanding all I have said, one of interest and pleasure.

"You are charged with despatches?" I observed, as we rolled away as fast as poor little Polish post-horses could trot—nay, I may add for the most part, gallop—leaving Warsaw and the Vistula far behind us, and wrapping ourselves well up in our fur cloaks, for the weather was already sufficiently like Christmas.

"Yes," said he, taking his pipe from his mouth; "I ought to have told you: I have the honour to be a Queen's Messenger."

"I am rejoiced to hear it!" I observed. "For my part, I am utterly unacquainted with the country, its people, and its language."

"Think as little of it as I do," said my merry companion. "There is not much to see, and less to know. Look out at each window as far as the horizon; it is not a pleasant scene. Well, having seen that, you will observe little or no change till we reach St. Petersburg. Warsaw is Poland; Petersburg and Moscow, Russia—as far as I know to the contrary. I rarely look out of my carriage window now. If I had not your agreeable society, I should read, smoke, eat, drink, or sleep; start and get there; and having got there, come back again."

"What a life of constant change yours must be!" I observed; "what numerous tales you must have to tell of the highway and the byway! what sources of attraction! It may be a hard life; yet at times it must have its seasons of pleasure. Do tell me, as far as your position permits, what is the origin and what the duties of the corps to which you belong?"

"Well," said he, "as far as I feel justified, I will gladly do so, if the telling will afford you any interest. We are called 'Queen's Messengers.' So far so good. It is pleasant to consider one's self *bonâ fide* the servant of such a Queen as our beloved Victoria. I think, however, a more appropriate name would be that of 'Foreign-Office Physical Telegrams.' In fact, ere the electric wire was invented, I believe, though not in my time, and you could have been scarcely born, Queen's Messengers were supposed to travel—and did in fact travel—quicker than their neighbours, taking out and bringing home Her Majesty's and Her Majesty's Foreign Secretary of State's *billets-doux*, during all seasons and weathers, to every Court in Europe with unheard-of rapidity. Now, in some measure, the wire does part of our work, if important; from time to time it conveys a portion of the kernel—we the nut intact. I have not seldom been asked the very questions you put to me."

"I am deeply interested in all you say," I replied.

"Well," he continued, "I believe, during a century past, those who were termed Crown Messengers lived at the palace of their Sovereign; in fact, were permanently attached to the Royal person, as are Equeries or other functionaries at the Court—often receiving, indeed for the most part receiving, their orders and despatches from their Sovereign's hands. In these days, though still termed Royal Messengers, and although still from time to time conveying Her Majesty's correspondence and despatches to foreign Courts or to members of the Royal Family, they are more immediately under the orders of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for the time being. In so far, I believe, our functions are generally known, and therefore am I at liberty to detail them. The whole corps of late years, however, has been essentially altered; the service is for the most part now performed by gentlemen who have served in the army—their number is reduced, and an examination in foreign languages is required previous to appointment. If, on the other hand, you ask me for a few

anecdotes of facts that have actually occurred to me personally, I will readily give them to you."

"Pray do so."

"Well, then," said the Colonel, laughing, "I rarely return from a journey that I do not meet with a friend who says, 'Halloa, Crampton, where are you from? what have you been doing of late?'"

"Come from—Doing! Why, I have just returned from Petersburg."

"Petersburg! How in the world did you get home this winter?"

"Three weeks after I meet another friend; he puts the same question, while I reply I have just returned from Constantinople, or Vienna, or Madrid, as may be. 'When!' he exclaims; 'by St. Hubert, for ears polite, you look as fresh as had you come out from a band-box. Four days and five nights *en route*, without stopping! You astonish me.' In other days it was not seldom fourteen days and nights."

"Nevertheless," I added, "you must oft-times have great interest in such journeys. And how much incident by the wayside!"

"We have, undoubtedly; and I only wish time and opportunity had permitted to take note of half that I have seen and heard. But you must bear in mind, all is not gold that glitters: we oft-times have to encounter the most tempestuous weather, by land as by sea, in foreign lands—sleepless nights, not always free from danger, and rapid change of climate. Moreover, it is not always agreeable to leave your happy home circle, with but brief notice. But I would not be a grumbler. The return to that home, be it only for a few brief days, causes us to forget the past in the comfort and happiness of the present. Moreover, constant change of air and scene, moderate living, or no man could travel as we do. The mere anticipation of home pleasures, society and novelty, though there is not much novelty in oft-times travelling the same route, doubtless, under God, gives us health and stamina to bear fatigue. However, I will give you, as far as I recollect, a few trifling incidents of travel."

"They will greatly interest me."

"Well; during the Crimean war, early in the month of May, I left London for Constantinople, *via* Marseilles, with despatches for that able diplomat, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, and that noble-hearted and ever-to-be-regretted soldier, Lord Raglan, then Commander-in-Chief of the army before Sevastopol. Of course my despatches were important at such a period, and of course, as in duty bound, I made every exertion to get forward. It so occurred, however, that at that precise period there had been a succession of very heavy rains—so heavy, that the banks of the Rhone had overflowed, and the luxuriant plains of France were inundated as one vast sea for league on league. At the moment when the flood was at its very worst, I reached Lyons, and you may conceive my astonishment when, on driving from the railway to my hotel, I found, even in the public square of Lyons, that the wheels of my carriage were up to their axles in water.

"Every possible argument was used by the landlord of the hotel, as by others, to convince me that any attempt on my part to proceed was utterly useless. There I was; there I might remain, or return the way I had come; the railway was under water, the trains were at a dead stop. In this dilemma I retired to bed for a few hours' repose. In spite of all assertions, however, I ordered the servants to call me at daybreak, and have a carriage at the door—for which I was prepared to pay. Luckily my orders were obeyed; and being up and dressed with the sun, I struggled by dint of bribes and persuasions, through water and mud, to the station. Who should I find on the platform but the Pope's Nuncio, the Pope's Nuncio's Secretary, and the Pope's Nuncio's Secretary's secretary, all as eager to get on as I was; they to meet an illustrious Cardinal, who was expected at Marseilles from Rome, in order to proceed to Paris for the baptism of the young Prince Napoleon—and I with my despatches. No doubt the presence of such important personages had great weight with the authorities, for after waiting some considerable time, the steam was got up and we started.

"The scene was painful, nay, melancholy to a degree, as we wound as it were along an embankment or serpent of earth, on each side beholding, instead of fertile cornfields and bright spring-bedecked valleys, nothing but rushing angry waters, tree-tops, and house-roofs. Sad as was my heart at such devastation, on my life I could not help wondering if His Eminence could swim, as, had the embankment given way, or an upset taken place at one of the sharp curves on the line, there was no hope but a ducking—or more likely, drowning. Thanks be to God, however, we arrived safe at Valence; and the railway embankment being there reported practical as far as Avignon—'onwards' was the word, still through a foaming sea of water. Arrived at the latter place, however, we came to a dead stop; some few leagues beyond, the railway embankment had been cut to save the town of Terascon, and His Excellency, his Secretary, and Secretary's secretary, as I thought with little pluck, gave up without a sigh, returning to Lyons or Paris as may be. In the meantime I had formed very different ideas on the subject, and at once declined their polite offer that I should accompany them.

"I stood alone with my belongings, as I beheld the train steam away and leave me to my fate. It was not a pleasant one—three yards of dry land by miles on miles of embankment winding through the flood, a solitary Englishman in a foreign land, and for what I knew to the contrary the fate of Europe, or Turkey, in my bag! I looked for a moment on the lofty Castle of Avignon—ancient Papal Palace—which alone appeared to me high and dry, then at the league on league of waters around me, till my heart felt sad at the very desolation of the scene, when, happily, aid came in the shape of a rude, leaky punt—in fact, a few planks hastily nailed together, scarcely water-tight;—what then—they were worth their weight in silver! No sail in sight to the wrecked mariner on a raft was

more welcome. In that frail punt I forthwith embarked with my precious charge, and was punted along the main streets of a town through which I had often walked. The scene was one that I shall never forget. Here we met a man in a hip-bath, handing up bread at the end of a pole to the windows of the half-starved inhabitants, for the waters had risen far above the lower storeys, and all chance of escaping was cut off;—there, a man in a large tub carrying messages from house to house; then a floating bloated human body; then the carcass of a sheep or cow—while numerous persons were gazing from the windows in despair. Through such a scene as this was I punted onwards to the Prefecture, held in the ancient palace I have named. Well might the Nuncio cry, Hold—enough! Gladly would I have done so likewise. At length I reached dry land, and, having placed my effects under the safe charge of a sentry, made my way to the Prefect. Here again I encountered a scene difficult to forget—men, women, and children crying aloud for succour and for bread; dead bodies, brought in from time to time, ranged along the walls of the corridor for recognition. In the midst of this unhappy sight, I found the Prefect doing his all, and far more than most men would or could, to calm the public mind, now raging with hunger and terror as the raging waters. He forthwith begged me with much kindness to wait awhile in his private apartment, till he could grant me ten minutes to listen to my wants; and, to do him only justice, I have rarely met with one more calm, and firm, and practical in the midst of turbulence and dismay.

“At length he entered, and shaking me kindly by the hand, with eyes half filled with tears, briefly remarked, that it was dreadful, but by God’s will it would soon pass—the weather was improving, the waters already diminishing. ‘And now,’ said he, after listening to all I had to tell, ‘you say you must get on if possible; well, there is but one chance, which is hazardous—nay, full of danger. If you can gain the bridge!—which is, as you observe, cut off on the town side by the flood; having crossed it, the land on the opposite shore is high and dry; you may pass the mountains to Nisme, and return again to the railway line at Terascon, from whence the line is open to Marseilles. I will give you a good boat, four active rowers, and two soldiers to carry your effects. If you can reach one of the arches of the bridge by rowing against the stream, which is now running like a torrent, you will find a succession of hooks or iron steps to the parapet—once on that bridge, you are safe! If you miss the hooks, your boat is at the mercy of the torrent. Will you try it?’ ‘I will,’ I replied. ‘Here then,’ said the good Prefect, ‘is an order to press horses on the other side. May God go with you, and protect you!’ Half an hour afterwards I found myself in a large boat, with four powerful rowers and two soldiers by my side; and we started. At first we passed through two or three narrow streets, and then merged as it were into what but a few days since doubtless had been a beautiful flower-bedecked garden, and thence evidently into the main river. Not a word was uttered

till this moment, when the 'bow-oar' bid us sit steady and leave the result to him. At this time the men were pulling for their lives, against a stream which rushed with a noise and apparent rapidity which pen can scarcely explain. Hard as they pulled against it, however, we were rapidly approaching one of the arches of the bridge, when the speaker quickly placed his oar in the boat, rose on his knees, took a strong cord in his hand, in which there were many loops, and with great dexterity cast one on a strong iron hook as we passed! It held us fast—we were safe! Thank God! I exclaimed in my inmost heart. Had we missed it, He alone knows what might have been our fate. One of the boatmen immediately clambered on the bridge—no great feat of difficulty—and bid me follow. This I declined, begging that my despatches might take the precedence. Our worthy allies, the Frenchmen, were evidently astonished at my refusal; but I was firm: despatches first—self afterwards! Had my body floated to the Mediterranean, I should have made a vacancy for some happy applicant. My virtues would have been extolled for the few weeks following my demise—my errors by the good forgotten, as should I have been, in a month. Had my despatches gone down into the dark rushing waters of the Rhone, I had no alternative but to follow them. Light was my heart, then, when I saw them safely hoisted over the parapet of the Bridge of Avignon—touching which there is a well-known French song; and light were my footsteps, as I followed them up the fragile iron steps. Once on the bridge, however, I lost no time in reaching the opposite shore and presenting my order for horses. But the long spring day had passed, and the bright moon shone calmly from a cloudless sky on the troubled waters, ere, in a sort of *chaise de poste*, to which were harnessed a horse and a mule, I rattled on my way to Nismes, which I reached as the sun once more shone over the beautiful landscape.

"Having despatched a telegram to Marseilles, entreating the *Messagerie* steamer, bound on that day for Constantinople, to await my arrival for a few hours, to which they replied in the affirmative, with a heart full of thankfulness and cheerfulness I sat down to a refreshing cup of *café au lait*—did what most Englishmen would have done, had a good wash; and then started by the first train for Terascon, and so on without further interruption to Marseilles.

"My misfortunes were by no means over on reaching Marseilles. Conceive my disgust, as the railway glided along, through rocks and olive trees, when approaching the coast I beheld the boat in which I had hoped to take passage, rapidly steaming, pass the *Château d'Iff*. They had either purposely deceived me, or I was behind my time. Here was a dilemma! I scarcely knew how to act. I felt that I had struggled thus far to be beaten at last.

"Happily, most happily, I found in the harbour a small British man-of-war steamer, commanded by a gallant high-bred English naval officer. This was good fortune indeed! After a brief consultation he decided on

taking me to Malta; and a most agreeable, nay, delightful passage, we had. Suffice it, that on my arrival I was transferred, by the courtesy of the French Admiral, on board a steam-corvette belonging to that nation, bound for Constantinople. I do not know which was the slowest, the vessel or her commander. A more eccentric or taciturn Frenchman I have rarely met. He was evidently labouring under some affliction, or was overwhelmed with disgust at the service, which, he subsequently informed me, he was happily about to quit, his period of service being nearly over. 'The sooner the better,' I thought. I had, however, no reason, on the whole, to complain of any want of courtesy or attention on his part, though he was nearly the cause of my death ere we parted. His little French dinners were good and well served; the small quantity of claret we drank of first-rate quality; the coffee and the *chasse* always forthcoming and excellent. Beyond this, the whole voyage was detestable.

"At length—O, happy sight!—we beheld the Isle of Marmora; then the Prince's Isles; then the Dome of St. Sophia and Seraglio Point,—we approached, in fact, that incomprehensible city, beautiful to behold from the blue waters of the Bosphorus—sad to contemplate in its dirty and miserable reality. My heart felt light; I had accomplished my task. I had performed my duty; my mission, so far, was all but ended. I was about to bid adieu, as I hoped for ever, to the slumbering corvette, the silent Captain, his coffee and his grog. In another hour I should be on shore, forgetful of the past and ready to return once more to my "home, sweet home," and fatherland. As I stood on deck, my belongings all prepared, expecting each moment that orders would be given to lower a boat and take me on shore—as, in fact, I was admiring the city and the clustered shipping in the offing, awaiting the sound of the anchors plashing in the water, we steamed gently past the French Admiral's ship, when up went our signal, which was immediately replied to, and instead of being landed, as I fondly anticipated, increased power of steam was put on. Pera and its palaces fast receded from my view; that of the Sultan was passed; and, in my agony, I clutched the Doctor by the collar and asked where we were going—Was it the Black Sea or Balaklava? Meantime the Captain stood on the bridge, calm and collected; I and my despatches were to him in the clouds, in the sea, or on the mountains: what cared he? At length, shutting up his telescope, he descended with measured step, and in a few words regretted being obliged to take me to Beicos Bay. 'Beicos Bay!' said I, with some anger. 'Beicos Bay is ten miles from Pera—the thermometer is at eighty—the stream of the Bosphorus running strong—how am I to return?' 'You will find a caique,' said the immovable commander. 'A caique!' I replied. 'After all the difficulties I have overcome, my despatches will be delayed six hours. Had you landed me at Tophana, I should have delivered them ere now; and this at the very moment when I was congratulating myself with having arrived at my destination only twelve hours after the French steamer!'

" 'I am very sorry, very sorry indeed,' added this illustrious specimen of the maritime power of France, shrugging his shoulders; 'very sorry; inconsolable—but what could I do? The Admiral signalled—Proceed to Beicos Bay to water—and I obeyed.'

" 'But why,' replied I, 'did you not signal that you had one of Her Majesty Queen Victoria's Messengers on board, with despatches? The Admiral would instantly have told you to put me on shore.'

" 'That, Monsieur,' again shrugging his shoulders, 'would have been, or rather was, no part of my duty; I wish you good morning.' His own officers were disgusted, and I swore—no, I did not swear; the following day I forgave and forgot him, though he caused me a severe attack of fever.

" 'We reached Beicos Bay, where I went on shore with the Doctor. The moment he put his foot on land his whole character appeared to change; his tongue broke loose, and I found him a kind and agreeable companion. He aided me to find a caique, which I at last accomplished; it was a crazy affair, with only one man to row it—with a scorching sun above, from the fierce rays of which I could only protect myself by taking off my coat and covering my head, while the stream rushed against us, as the sailors say, nine knots an hour.

" 'At length I reached the City of the Sultan, and was compensated for all my troubles by finding that no correspondence whatever had reached the capital from Europe—I alone had turned up with my despatches.

" 'But here we are; it is not a bad halting-place; we have posted twelve hours without stopping, and accomplished one hundred and forty versts. You must be tired! No? Well, that's all right; hand out the prog-basket; we shall find a clean, well heated room; a "Zomovar," (a Russian tea-urn) and some excellent tea—such, perhaps, as you have never tasted; to-morrow we shall pass the Polish frontier and enter Russia. If you have not had enough of my travelling tales I will give you some concerning the land through which we are posting."

THE MYSTERY OF MISS MARSH'S LODGER.

SINCE the expiration of Miss Marsh's occupancy, scores of tenants have come in, and gone out, of 14 Great Rumball Street. Young tenants, mysteriously transplanted at night in doctors' coat-pockets from outlying parsley-beds—old tenants, crossing a threshold for the last time, feet foremost, on their way to the house of the single-chamber—little tenants, who had played at hide-and-seek and blindman's-buff through its rooms, and who had many a long year after played out their little game with Fortune, seeking her in vain in her retreat, or, blinded in their turn, meeting her buffet as she slipped through their grasp. Tenants who were parish models in the matter of decent behaviour and window-cleaning—who were parish scandals for broils and drunken rioting through the quiet night. Tenants who kept the house like a new pin with paint and whitewash—who suffered it to drop into a chronic decay of blue mould and broken panes. Tenants who paid the rent, and fire insurance and taxes, to the tick of the time—who kept a besieged state from the *posse comitatus* holding parley with the milk and bread from the first-floor window—who kept Hope at the bottom of some earthen jar amongst their chattels—who had the skeleton-closet adjoining their best bedroom. Gentle tenants, whose dream of life had issued from the ivory gates of Love,—tenants who brooded over ugly nightmares, a misshapen and cruel rout. Tenants who had vast plans of expansive creed for the amelioration of all humanity. Tenants whose interests in the world were covered with one man's hat. Tenants who had failed, who had thriven, who had gone forth to far-off countries, whence they breathed many a memory to the old house in the dear motherland where they had suffered or rejoiced. Tenants whose feet, treading through the years, had worn away the very stones before the door. Little bright-eyed, sleek tenants, who, when the shadows and silence kept empty house, scampered hither and thither through the bare chambers—that wove the cunning web in dark corners—that night after night crawled their shiny tracks over the desolate walls.

In all these tenants, 14, Great Rumball Street, was in nowise remarkable. 15, Great Rumball Street, had the same list, to be matched by 13. So all up and down the street. So with the house I write in, where many, long since dead, have knocked at my door, then theirs—have sat by my hearth, have looked from my window;—where many a man and woman a thousand miles away—many not born yet—may knock and enter of right when the wooden house I inhabit shall have long since fallen in, and nobody cares to repair it. So with yours,—so with every one's, provided it but stand through a few years more or less; certainly so with 14, Great Rumball Street.

Just now one would be puzzled to say who is the representative tenant, it is let out into so many subdivisions of handicrafts, all asserting their respective claims to the portion of door-posts where their bells are

ranged one above the other; and to the door itself—where the French-polisher in the parlour, the working-jeweller in the first-floor, and the dress and pelisse maker in the second, announce themselves in brass and zinc; all, I should think, with more than their fair complement of offspring, to argue from the children that swing upon the railings and play upon the door-steps, and generally harass the skirts of the house. But, in Miss Marsh's time it was so different! That was, as I said, very many years ago. Then it was all so trim and tidy. The windows shone. The old-fashioned balsams and mignonette from the sills blossomed kindly out upon the street. The blinds hung straight and snowy. The brass knocker and door-knob were stainlessly radiant. It was a positive pleasure to see rosy-cheeked Marian come, in her clean cap and rough check apron, with clinking pail and twirling mop, to wash the steps in a morning and sluish and polish every speck away. That was what old Mrs. Withers, who lived opposite, said; and she ought to have known if any one did, for she passed her life sitting in her easy chair, knitting, and looking out of window at the world of Great Rumball Street.

I do not think if Mrs. Withers's spectacles had been of twenty times stronger magnifying power they could have seen anything to disapprove in her opposite neighbour's arrangements. All was so frugal, and cleanly, and patent to society. From six o'clock in the morning, when the window of Miss Marsh's bedroom was opened to the cheerful early sunshine, to ten at night, when her candle was extinguished, you might almost read her daily life of simple industry on the other side of the walls—at least in so far as any one can read any one else's daily life. But amongst other things which Mrs. Withers, and the world in general, saw in the course of time, was a change in Miss Marsh's circumstances—long suspected, but only openly announced one day by a flag of distress in the parlour-window, bearing the legend "Apartments to let;" and, in the course of time also, they witnessed the arrival of Miss Marsh's lodger.

I think, in a general way, householders are disposed to resent the existence of lodgers as a class—are disposed to view them with suspicion and treat them with rigour. So, in proportion to the good-will felt by Great Rumball Street to No. 14 was its distaste to the newly-installed "first-floor." He was a young man. He was a medical student. He was a fine, strapping fellow. Given all these premises, would not the fair deduction be late hours—rollicking—dissipation—extravagance? Decidedly, Miss Marsh was imprudent, to say the least of it, to take such an occupant under her quiet, orderly roof—and with that young, good-looking servant too! Had it been an elderly lady now, or a blind gentleman, or, in fact, any one else—although she would have done better to have given up housekeeping altogether, and become a lodger herself.

So the little world of the street settled the affair of their neighbour for her, years upon years ago; just as the younger world of to-day

arranges for another generation of neighbours—just as my affairs are decided for me, and yours settled for you.

For once, however, they were wrong; and, whether right or wrong, as the popular manner is, having had their say out, they soon forgot all about the young man who had occasioned it—only to Miss Marsh, and to Miss Marsh's maid he became an object of daily-increasing interest.

Every man is a hero to some woman; so, to these two, he became part of daily life—his breakfast, his fire, his boots, his bed, his books being made much of; just, only in lesser degree, as his mother, the clergyman's widow down amongst the Somerset orchards, and his young sister, and one other, talked of him, and prayed for him, and kept him in their loving, simple hearts.

It was September when Ralph Sellwood entered upon his lodgings; and now it is May. All that time he had been studying hard in the schools of medicine he had come to town to attend, making way steadily, and becoming a favourite for a frank, genial good nature, which accorded well with his vigorous health and light heart, and good looks. Many a day, after some jest of the moment had been uttered, or some boyish freak had been played, they were remembered, and thrown into the casting-up of the sum. So much for the generalities of the young man's life.

On Sunday, the 14th of May, as the bells were ringing for morning prayers, Mr. Sellwood, coming down stairs, encountered, at the open hall-door, his landlady dressed for church, and talking to a friend who had paused without, also on her way to the service. The fresh sunshine lit up the street. The sky was blue above. There were a thousand sweet odours of early summer in the air. A vision of the fragrant country seized him, and smote him with the indefinable longing that every one has experienced—a longing to feel the foot upon the greensward, and to bare the head to the pure breeze upon the hill! Miss Marsh, however, with all her kindly sympathies, would not have had one for such a want. The tender sky, and the cowslip meadow, and the blue-bell bank in the wood, were things, so to speak, to be put decently out of sight and hearing, like the children's toys in a drawer, from Saturday till Monday. All this had often been discussed between young Sellwood and his landlady—on one side with raillery, on the other with the nearest approach to acrimony that gentle nature was capable of. But he was in no mood for a lecture now; so, in reply to her question of which church he was going to, he said, on the spur of the moment, he was going to a friend at some distance, with whom he should remain to dine. Miss Marsh had then said, neither would she return for the day, but would accept the invitation her acquaintance without had just been urging upon her, to go to hear a distant preacher and remain with her. As the young man passed out, she stepped back to tell her maid the change in her arrangements.

Ralph Sellwood was soon out of the streets; it did not then take so long to leave them behind as now. The streams of people with prayer

and hymn books, bound sedately to church and chapel, gradually declined into one or two late and hurried stragglers. The bells had ceased, and as he passed here and there a place of worship he could hear the deep boom of the organ within, or the voices of the congregation singing some old psalm-tune, that seemed like a faint echo coming back, muffled and indistinct but familiar, from his boyhood. A morbid sense of isolation weighed down his buoyant nature as he strode on through the bright, sad, Sunday streets—a yearning for home and the dear faces there, such as a child might feel, fell upon him with a fierce impotence. As he stretched northwards away by the then country villages of Highgate and Hampstead, and sat down upon the wild Heath overlooking the great City, it was not London below that he saw with his vacant eyes, but the distant cottage with the pear-tree against the gable, and the jessamine around the porch, and the fragrant cabbage-roses and sweet lavender in the garden. It was his mother with her widow's dress that sat at the open window of the cool low parlour, and his sister and young cousin, in their Sunday white frocks and blue ribands, that paced up and down the path without, as he had so often seen them. Under that pure light, gentle Memory took his hand, and opened many a long-closed chamber.

A clock rudely struck out the hour, and all the vision melted away. There was only the wild heath, and the woods, and the stern fact of London at his feet. He rose, and stretched himself. He felt tired, and cross, and hungry, and in no mood for companionship. Instead, therefore, of seeking out any of his friends, as he had had some vague intention of doing, he bethought him of turning home again, and getting through an accumulation of work in writing out old notes of lectures which he had neglected. So, like a working-man he stepped out. There is nothing like a brisk walk for restoring the mental circulation. By the time he had got past the fields and gardens on to the flagstones, he had left behind all the gloom and reverie of his morning's idle dreams, and was, through the elasticity of his nature, once more gay and sanguine as ever. As he got into his own neighbourhood, they were taking down the shutters from a public-house much frequented by the students of the hospital, and where he was well known. There he turned in, and took a glass of ale and bread and cheese; and as the clock struck two let himself in with his latch-key at his lodgings.

Everything Ralph Sellwood did, whether it were work or play, he did in earnest, so he lost no more time in dreaming, but, sitting down to his table, commenced putting into order the *disjecta membra* scattered through his note-book. He read and he wrote, he wrote and he read, on and on, fluently and clearly, interested in his subject, and with the indefinite, pervading glow of satisfaction which attends any kind of successful labour. The sunshine, which had streamed broadly down upon the floor of the room when he began, rose to the chairs, to the tables, to the walls—higher and higher, till it vanished. The bells had again rung out their summons to

evening prayer, and all was still. Closer and closer he bent to the task he had set himself for his day's work. It was a race between him and the fast-fading light. No! strain his eyes as he might, he could no longer see the faint pencil-marks to which he referred, and he wanted but a few lines more to finish all up! His lamp, ready trimmed, stood upon the dumb-waiter in the corner; but in those days lucifers were not; it was the stern old *régime* of steel and tinder-box, and the place of the fire in the grate was filled with the fragrant beau-pot of hawthorn and sweet-briar. Putting down his pen he rang his bell, therefore, for a candle, and sat waiting in the twilight. He rang again, and again. He then bethought him that it was Sunday, and he had said he would not return,—there was, probably, no one at home but himself; so he went down stairs to seek what he required. Everything in the underground kitchen was quiet, and so dark, that for a moment he could not distinguish what was that motionless heap yonder—only a terrible instinct made his heart stand still. In an instant he had stirred up the smouldering embers of the fire into something of a blaze, and had turned the purple, swollen face to its light. Oh, horror! There, with protruding tongue, bitten through and dropping blood, with wild, starting, dead eyes, with fiercely-clenched blue hands, lay Marian, the pretty, fresh maid he had seen but a few hours before. It was the work of an instant to light a candle, to tear apart her dress, to take out his lancet and open the vein in her neck. Alas, no! The blood was still warm, but it had ceased to flow for ever! Then, with a wild cry for help, Ralph Sellwood rushed into the street.

This was on the 14th of May. The Criminal Courts were then sitting, and, on the 11th of June following, he was placed at the bar of the Old Bailey on a charge of "wilful murder!"

There could not be a clearer case educed from circumstantial evidence. Read it, as it stands in those dark annals side by side with other cases, and you will see it fits in, piece by piece, to a complete mosaic, while many of them, considered sufficiently proven, have here and there irreconcilable gaps of contradiction.

The Crown Prosecutor had not many witnesses to call. The barmaid at the tavern, who had served the prisoner with drink at half-past one—(she remembered the hour by the doors having been just opened)—and the gentlewoman who from her opposite windows had seen him enter the house with his latch-key as the clock struck two, were the principal ones. The person to whom Miss Marsh had been speaking in the morning also bore testimony to the young man having distinctly said he was engaged to spend the day at a distance, and to his having heard his landlady speak of her intention not to return till night. This Miss Marsh herself was obliged to confirm, and a cross-examination only strengthened the impression of the intimacy which had existed between the prisoner and the deceased.

Now for the aspect of the house.

Everything was undisturbed. The plate gathered together in the basket was safe in its accustomed place. There was money lying open in the girl's workbox upon the dresser. The kitchen-table had been set for tea for two persons, and there stood also upon it a bottle of brandy, which was proved to belong to Mr. Sellwood. He had been seen to enter the house at two o'clock, and it was nearing eight when he called for assistance. What had he been doing in the interim? It was in vain to point to the mass of manuscript. That only referred to weeks and weeks past, as the date of the notes and evidence of the Professors who delivered the lectures went to show. Nor could he attempt to prove having had any such engagement as he had spoken of.

As for the deceased, she was a quiet, reserved person from the country, having no friends in London.

There was no question raised of "Death from natural causes." It was a palpable case of "Murder," so palpable, that Sellwood's counsel advised him as his best chance to plead guilty to the charge of "Manslaughter;" but to this, as to every imputation of the crime, the young man, heart-broken and bewildered as he was, persisted to the last in returning an indignant insistence of his innocence.

Yes! to the last; and that was not very far off, for in those good old times there was little fear of the sword of justice rusting in its scabbard. Barely six weeks had elapsed from the committal of the crime to that unclouded sweet summer morning when the unhappy lad made that dreary journey along Holborn and Oxford Street, whose termination was Tyburn. There he was "hanged by the neck till he was dead," and Justice sheathed her sword, and rode home in her coach.

Thirty years after that June, when fine stuccoed houses were beginning to rise on the clearing of the ugly, fruitful Tyburn-tree, and when Justice, no longer taking her morning drive westward, only made a good breakfast and took but one step to the adjoining scene of her triumphs, a relation of the jotter-down of these facts was jogging along, as country clergymen are wont to jog through the green lanes of their rural districts. He was thinking of turnips, or tithes, or Sunday's sermon, or Monday's vestry meeting—of nothing, or anything rather than what he was riding to hear. For, truth must be told, the best of vicars riding to visit a dying bed does not spur his beast wildly, and think of nothing but his mission.

The call which the clergyman had received the night before as he paced, in the purple evening light, by the south wall of his garden, peacefully contemplating the strawberry beds and mellowing greengages, was one which often came to the Vicarage—"A man was bad and wanted to see the parson." He was lying at a house at the extreme end of the parish, a good four miles off, where he had lived as farm-servant for some time. He was now down with fever, and all his cry was for the Minister. It was in compliance with this request, therefore, that the Vicar mounted

his mare next morning, and rode through the rich country, where the ripening fields of corn and the fragrant hay gave promise that the year should be crowned with plenty.

The mistress of the farm was a kind-hearted dame, well esteemed by my relative, who generally had a crack with her on market-days, and who always saw her in her place at church, as became a decent woman. She now came out to meet him as he rode into the yard. "The sick man was still alive, but sinking fast. He had lived with them fourteen years come next Martinmas, and all that time had never so much as once crossed the church threshold. Some thought he was a Papish, and some a Jew; but he was very close, and nobody cared much to meddle with him. He was a steady, sober man, and could not be said to be the worse for liquor more than once or twice in the year; it was after one of these bouts he had fallen sick, a month or more ago." So the good woman gossiped.

The room in which the sick man lay, was in a range of out-buildings appropriated to the farm-labourers; a glance at the ashen face, and tight, receding lips, on the pillow of the truckle-bed, convinced the Vicar that his hours were indeed numbered. At such diagnosis Divinity is as skilful as Physic. The door was closed, and they were alone—not a sound but the ticking of the clergyman's watch, and the buzz of the summer insects by the window. Then the sick man spoke, labouring in that sweat of his brow as he had never laboured in all his hard life before. "What day is it?" "It is Thursday, my friend," said the Vicar; "Thursday, the 29th day of June." "That'll do. Sit'ee down there; I've something I want'ee to put down in writing."

Upon the table lay inkstand and paper ready prepared, and he sat down. I copy *verbatim* from the document he wrote at that bedside, taking down the words as they slowly fell from the dying lips:—

"My name isn't John Gibson. My right name is Thomas Dell. My cousin's name was Marian Dell, and I was courting her a matter of five-and-thirty year ago. She went up to London to place, and I had a situation as helper in the stable at 'The Three Crowns.' When we had saved a bit of money we were to be married, and take a public,—but that was all talk. When she went away I got stupid-like, and didn't care for nothing. I tried the Methody's, as I heard people say that did them good; but it didn't do me none. After that I broke clean out, and took to the drink, and skittle-playing, and that finished by my losing my place. Then I rummaged about, and got from bad to worse; not because I was thinking of the young woman. I 'most clean forgot her, and I'm sure I didn't want her to think of me. If I'd a known she was coming down one street, I'd a gone up the other. I'd no character, and couldn't get no employment, so I went on the cross altogether.

"I'd been in London a matter of two year, when, one day, who should I see but my young woman going along with her basket. I knew her in a moment, and she knew me, for all the change in me, and though I hadn't

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a decent tack to my back. We was very good friends, and I often see her after that. I used to watch for her when she went out of errands. I think if she'd a taken up with me agen I'd have turned over a new leaf; but she seemed to have got proud and uppy; and whenever I talked of sweethearting she'd take herself off with a bounce, as though she wouldn't demean herself with the likes of me.

"It was somewhere about Christmas that I got into some trouble about a trifle, and got four months for it. When I came outside the gate I was in rags, and had only a few halfpence in my pocket. My position was a most unpleasant one. I was in the wide world without a friend and without a character. I feared every constable I met was on the watch for me, although I had done nothing to care for. But yet I was afeard. I didn't know what to do, unless I went on the cross again. I hung about until Sunday, and I was a'most starved out. Then I thought I'd go and make a hole in the water, but that I'd just see the girl first.

"There was some stables running at the back of the house where she lived as servant. I'd been up there before, and see her cleaning the windows. When I got up there, I found one right close where the bricklayers had been at work, and left open. I easy swung down, and crept under the wall of the back kitchen to see if she was there; but there wasn't a sign of her. Then I got a handful of ashes and heaved it at the window. In a moment out she comes, and when she see me she looked quite white and skared, as though she'd a fainted away. Then, without a word, she took me down into the kitchen. It was 'most like a parlour, and she was dressed for all the world like a lady, in a beautiful sprigged cotton gown. I've seed it often enough since then! We didn't say nothing much, but she set the tea and put out a bottle of liquor, and I took a good swig of it. I suppose it was my being so right down clammed that made it get up into my head. I felt as though I should like to skreek out and hit some'at. I says 'Come, Mary, give us a kiss, my lass!' Then she rises up like a queen, and says, 'You wretched man, you'll never be no better than a gaol-bird, and a disgrace to everybody belonging to you! Leave this house before any one comes into it, and never let me see your face no more.'

"Then my blood was up, and I began to reckon her over about a young man that lodged in the house, and we got to high words. Then I suppose the devil had right hold of me, for I caught her by the arm; but she hit me with the other hand. She was going to scream out, but I caught her by the throat. She was very strong in the arms, and we had a tussle for it. While we was struggling the bell rang. I thought we was alone in the house, and I was 'most frantic mad; so I gave her a grip that did for her, and she only fetched one moan, and fell down straight out of my hands. Then I was frightened, and all my strength seemed gone in a moment, and to run out of me in a cold sweat, like water. I heard steps coming down, and I had only barely time to hilde in a coal-cellar at the

foot of the stairs before the young man that lived in the house came down. He was a doctor, and he tried to bring her to, but 'twant no use. When the crowd come into the house I got mixed up with them, and nobody suspected me, for they'd all made up their minds the other young man had done it.

"I went to his trial, and I went to his execution. He was very genteel and pretty spoken. I got a place right under the scaffold, for I felt I must see the last of it. He was dressed all in black, with his hair tied with a blue riband—somebody said his sweetheart had sent it to him. When his arms were pinioned, he stood up facing the crowd, very pale, but quite composed, as if he was laid in his coffin, and he says, quite distinct—'Good people, I go to meet my God innocent of this crime!' and, as I live, he looked straight at me with his shining eyes.

"His name was Mr. Ralph Sellwood, and the house where it happened was 14, Great Rumball Street, London.

"After that, two or three times, I tried to make away with myself, but I couldn't. Once the rope broke, but I've the welt of it on my neck now.

"On the 14th of every May, wherever I am, I see Marian Dell in her flowered gown; and on the 29th of June the young man! The first year they appeared they wasn't so big as my little finger, but quite perfect, eyes and all. The next year they was as long as my hand, and every time they've been growing bigger. I shouldn't have minded so much if they was always the same. 'Twas no use getting drunk; I've tried that. This May I was mending a barrow in one of the sheds, and she come and stood looking in at the door. She was now just her natural size, and I knowed by that she'd never come no more.

"I feel I'm dying, and I solemnly declare every word of this confession is true.—JOHN GIBSON, his mark X."

Exhausted by the lengthened effort, the lids dropped over that dreadful dull line of light seen under half-closed dying eyes; the fingers plucked feebly at the coverlet; the thickening speech became incoherent as he muttered fast. The clergyman stood, sadly, trying now and again to deliver his message of pardon and peace.

Suddenly, with a wild cry and outflung arms, he rose upon his feet in the bed, glared with a savage terror into vacancy, and—was gone!

Thirty years! Whose story lasts so long? To whom could erring Justice come now with a mournful acknowledgment of her mistake? Those heart-broken women whom it so cruelly concerned had long ago gone to the Source of all truth and justice. And as for the world—the world, buying and selling, marrying and giving in marriage, eating and drinking, and living the life of to-day, holds as little reckoning of that other world of a dead and gone generation, as the tenants that sleep, and rise, and sleep again, under the roof of the old Rumball Street house, do of their predecessors of more than half a century ago.

WHENCE?

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."—HAMLET.

THE poet Coleridge—long before he had become entangled in the subtleties of the "omject" and "sumject," and whilst yet a bare-headed blue-coated boy—on one occasion converted the Strand into the Hellespont, and a poor street-lamp into the signal-light of the beautiful priestess of Sestos. The poet, we are told, was proceeding through the well-known thoroughfare I have mentioned, stretching out his arms in the manner of one who is swimming, when a passenger, finding a hand at his coat-tail, suddenly turned round, rudely seized the boy, and accused him of an attempt at picking his pockets. Coleridge denied the charge; and thereupon, and as an excuse for his strange motions, made the singular confession that he had utterly forgotten where he was, and had somehow firmly believed himself to be in the waters of the Hellespont, across which he was endeavouring to swim. The writer to whom we owe this anecdote relates the circumstance precisely as he would have described any ordinary event in the life of the subject of his biography, and seems to have had no conception of recording anything unusual, or what needed comment or explanation. And, to most persons, the incident does doubtless appear to be eminently ludicrous. They look upon Coleridge as, what he termed himself, a playless day-dreamer, and regard this performance of his as the mere passing fancy of a distempered imagination—a fancy such as all are sometimes subject to, and poets more especially. I am, however, inclined to believe there is in the occurrence something strange—something of mystery—and that, to the mind of the boy, the scene had possessed the essential properties of a real spectacle. I am convinced, by plentiful experience, that there is in the human mind a mysterious power which is able to re-call and re-create what has disappeared into the Past; and which, though at present awaiting recognition and direction, will hereafter strengthen itself—extend itself—and be of no small account to humanity. And this faculty is by no means rare; nor is it confined to Poets. Many who read these lines will, perhaps, have observed its workings in their own minds. I myself—no poet, and but an indifferent prose-writer—am continually subject to the effects of its influence. What it is—why it is—whence it is, I cannot tell. I know it only in its results.

This sensibility is the effect—or, perhaps, I ought rather to say the defect—of my organization. I can no more help being influenced by the power of which I am speaking than I can help being hungry after a long fast. It is not reverie, for reverie would imply a voluntary submission; but I do not readily yield. On the contrary, I resist its influence—yet it comes. I fly from it—yet it follows. All it requires is a situation wherein to unfold itself, and I am completely at its mercy.

It exerts itself in many and various ways; but, as I have said, I am acquainted with it in its effects alone. Without, therefore, attempting an explanation of what is from its nature inexplicable, let me give some examples of its mode of operation.

You must know, then, I am an inveterate street-walker; being, indeed, as De Quincey has it, a philosopher of the peripatetic sect. It is my habit to go out and wander about London without any fixed purpose other than my own entertainment. But, if I derive no real profit from these perambulations, the employment has come to afford me a sort of melancholy pleasure I am unable to resist. I regard the streets as peculiarly my domain, and compare myself to the Astronomer who devotes night after night to the task of watching the heavens in order to discover new worlds, or to see that none of the old ones be missing. As with him, the scope of my observation is unlimited. Nor are our occupations totally different; for is not every man I meet an Atlas bearing on his shoulders a world—sometimes beautiful and in order; sometimes a very chaos? And, whilst contemplating the stream of human countenances eddying and flowing around me in any crowded thoroughfare, I make many discoveries. I look upon some with wonder—upon some with dread—upon all with curiosity. To me, every face is the photograph of a soul, and has distinctive features. With all I find myself in a position to become acquainted in a more or less intimate degree; none that passes will thenceforth be to me an entire stranger; and, now and then, but at unexpected intervals, some one will seem to demand a closer examination than I usually bestow. I dread to meet him, for, upon his approach, I feel conscious of possessing the unwelcome power to read the full history of his life, and to follow him with my mental eye through his previous career. However distasteful the exercise of this power may be to my feelings, my endeavours to restrain it are unavailing. As I look, and whilst he passes, his whole appearance undergoes a radical change; he becomes younger; his features assume an altogether new expression. Then, scene after scene develops itself—each more remote in point of time—with all the vividness of reality, and a distinct and definite impression is left upon me, just as if I had become thoroughly acquainted with the person in the ordinary way. The reception of these ideas is not within my own power, nor have I any intimation of their approach. I cannot suppress them; I cannot control them; I cannot terminate them. When they come, however, I am wholly under their dominion. You may call it hallucination, or the vagaries of a day-dreamer; to me, however, they are no voluntary fictions of the brain, but real and spontaneous presentations, and I feel an inward conviction of their truth.

As with persons, so with places. Everybody that observes cannot fail to have noticed, that long contemplation of any object completely alters its appearance. The impression it left, in time wears itself out, and is insensibly succeeded by another. That strangeness which at first sight

characterizes the object, becomes invariably dissipated by familiarity, and, at last, the thing assumes a permanent expression wholly different from what it bore when first seen. In common with others, I have noticed this fact. There is, too, another, of similar nature, that I once believed I alone had observed, but which I now find is by no means the case. Tennyson, but in a very limited and partial sense, has noticed it in the following passage:—

“As when we dwell upon a word we know,
Repeating till the sound we know so well
Becomes a wonder, and we know not why.”

Thus the converse operation is performed in the mind. What has been familiarized loses its accustomed appearance, and reverts to that which it originally presented.

With me, these sensations are of recent growth. At one time I had so great a difficulty in conceiving the past and the absent, that whenever I endeavoured, in imagination, to revivify scenes that had previously occurred, or to recall bygone events or the appearance of a person with whom I had been acquainted, the attempt was an utter failure. But, now, my conception is too distinct—my organization is too easily affected—all my senses conspire against me. A peculiar scent, a note of music, a cloud rolling from off the face of the sun, a motion of my body, even, is often the sole cause in producing a renewal of impressions first received years ago, and feelings long since gone and forgotten. And not only in recalling to the memory, with intense truth, my own experiences that have faded away, but also in reproducing scenes in which, by the nature of things, I never could have participated. A casual glance at the name of a street is sufficient to call up to my second-sight scenes that have been enacted therein, or persons that I know have in some way been connected with it. Thus, it occasionally happens to me that a street with which I am perfectly familiar suddenly loses its accustomed appearance, and assumes that strangeness and newness with which I first beheld it. For a moment or two it retains this aspect. Then, by degrees, there comes a change, and, instead of reverting to the appearance with which I am most familiar, the street becomes the nucleus of extraordinary phenomena. A strange spectacle presents itself. That ever-moving crowd, which to me is solitude, begins, one by one, to disappear; that roaring traffic, which on me produces the same effect as silence elsewhere, begins to subside; my senses become involuntarily inactive; the impressions of surrounding objects fade away. Then, another crowd and another kind of noise succeed, and I feel I am in contact with beings that, I know by some intuition, have long since disappeared beyond the limits of temporal influence. At first, all is a bewildering confusion; the figures that flit to and fro possess an indistinctness of outline not unlike what is commonly observed in a thick November fog; nothing is clearly visible. But there soon follows order, and distinctness, and harmony, and I

find myself—*spectator*, *hand particeps*—in the midst of a scene that I feel convinced must in former years have been enacted in that street. After a while, it grows fainter and fainter, and at last, just as the vapour produced by breathing on glass evaporates, completely wears itself out. The forms I see, move along just as people of to-day; they appear to recognize each other; enter into conversation with each other; and have all the characteristics of real beings. As for myself, I do not speak—I cannot speak; I am among them, but not of them; I am not perceived, but I perceive these forms as plainly as I perceive this paper on which I am writing, and with such distinctness as to enable me long afterwards to recall to my mind their gait, their lineaments, the expression of their countenances—the very texture of their skin. I am, moreover, enabled by some internal but unmistakable assurance to recognize individuals and identify events. Thus—to omit lesser incidents—I have found myself at Westminster in the crowd that thronged the approaches to the Abbey at the coronation of Henry VII.; I have seen Shakspeare (“of the Globe” in more senses than one), hurrying along to his theatre in Bankside; I have been jostled by the mob that attended the execution of Charles the First; in Russell Street, at Covent Garden, I have stood and watched “the Wits” as they came out from Wills’ or Button’s. To come to a later period—I have, in Holborn, been passed by that wonderful Boy who left Bristol and came to live, and starve, and die, in London; and, in the same thoroughfare, have, for some short distance, followed the Viscount Chateaubriand with dishevelled hair and bloodshot eye—dragging himself along, devoured of hunger, deserted of sleep—come abroad that none might know his destitution.

Nor, at the time of their occurrence, does it appear at all strange to me that I should see these sights. I am sensible of no surprise at their coming, and, as in a dream persons never question the reality of the apparitions that present themselves, so in presence of these phantom-scenes of mine I am firmly convinced of their reality. I am, however, fully aware they are not real existences, in the ordinary sense of the term; but I feel them to be true pictures of actual persons and occurrences. Whenever the spectacle is generated I cannot evade it, it is not in my power to dissipate it; the scene must wear itself out. My attention is completely absorbed by the spectacle, and I am bound to be a silent spectator of what is going on. Once—and once only—was I conscious of exerting force to free myself from the enthrallment. I was walking through an unobserving train of these phantoms, when suddenly a bell in some neighbouring church struck out. On all occasions, if a sound from the outer world is heard by me, the spell is at once broken and I am released. But on this, I could clearly hear the bell, and yet it was as if I were altogether out of the world whence it came. I was alarmed at the idea of participating in two distinct existences. Terror came on me as in a nightmare. A thought struck me that I was

henceforth to live in visions. I struggled, with all my might, to free myself. All my attempts were in vain; every effort served only to weaken my power of resistance—the spectacle maintained itself. At last, and after I had given myself up to its influence, it suddenly and spontaneously disappeared.

Of kindred origin—if not derived from the same inscrutable cause—is another class of feelings to which I am sometimes subject. A scene beheld for the first time appears with an aspect of perfect familiarity. A house, a person, or a landscape presents itself, and I recognize it, although it is utterly impossible I could ever before have seen it. I feel as if I were renewing a former moment of existence. Three winters ago I was passing through Birmingham on my way to Ireland. Having to walk from one station to another, I had engaged the service of a porter to carry my baggage. We were proceeding in company, when suddenly I was obliged to halt. Turning out of a narrow lane, through which we had threaded our way to shorten the distance, I found myself in front of an old-fashioned brick house by which we were to pass. Most people, it is certain, would have seen nothing remarkable or singular in the appearance of this house. Upon me, however, it had a peculiar effect. The moment I saw it, I felt much as I should had a cord been tied round the great artery of my heart and suddenly loosened. The physiognomy of the house was impressive. It seemed to have a threatening aspect, and to menace me in a strange and unaccountable way. I feared to pass it. I became possessed of the idea it was by some means or other to be connected with my fate. I had never before been at Birmingham; but I was positive I had previously seen this house. I felt assured I was able to find my way through its rooms and passages—draw, without entering, the plan of its interior—make an inventory of its books and furniture, and otherwise describe its contents, with as much accuracy as if I had been familiar with it from childhood. This impression had all the weight of certainty to my mind. Moreover, the belief that it boded ill to me became deeply rooted in my imagination, and I feared to approach it. But this apprehension did not arise simultaneously with the idea of having seen the house before; neither was it inherent in that idea, but deduced therefrom by me. Nevertheless, the impression I received was of a character to justify the rendering I gave it. It was an impression that conveyed an intimation of some future danger; but when, or from what, or in what way, was not apparent. Fear suggested the interpretation, and my mind was predisposed to accept it. I was constrained to turn back!

There is too, here, in London, a house which has the same effect upon me as did that at Birmingham. It is in the neighbourhood of Leicester Square—large, gloomy, and retiring. On the day I saw it first, I was sensible of a kind of precognition. The instant I beheld the object, I became conscious of experiencing a repetition of some previous impression.

I strove to recollect the occasion, but failed: the impression was too vague and fleeting. I could not, that is to say, recall to my mind the distinct points in time and place wherein and whereat it originally occurred. At length, I was irresistibly forced to the conclusion that the seemingly long interval which had elapsed between the antecedent impression and the present, was altogether imaginary—that, in reality, both were cotemporaneous; and, that the time which seemed to have passed was purely a fiction of the mind—created at the moment the object first appeared, and accepted by Consciousness as belonging to the identity of its being. The house I speak of wears a sombre and mysterious air. I often see it, and have since frequently passed near it, but never have been able to bring myself to approach it. My reason discredits the superstition; but the feeling is so deeply-rooted in my mind, that all the wealth of all the Treasuries of Europe would not induce me voluntarily to enter.

Such are some of the sensations to which I am subject. I may here be permitted to state, that I am conscious of no bodily or mental disorder: I suffer from no organic disease, nor am I labouring under any temporary functional derangement. Whence, then, do these sensations arise? No discovered law of the human mind can adequately account for them; neither that of Contiguity, nor that other of Constructive Association, will avail us; other causes must be sought. I am no believer in the Supernatural; that is, in the possibility of anything occurring out of the order of Nature. But—in reply to that large class, the “matter-of-fact” philosophers, who will assume the whole to be a delusion, “breaking in upon the laws of Nature, which are uniform, invariable,” &c.,—I would ask, What are these laws? How do you know when they are broken in upon? You should, first of all, discover the whole of those laws, before you can, with truth, say what is and what is not a law; and this is plainly not in your power. Besides, it is possible we may (and in reality we do) observe effects, the causes of which lie necessarily beyond the sphere of our observation to discover. To discriminate the real from the false is not always so easily accomplished as “matter-of-fact” philosophers imagine. I will take leave to ask them one question: Time and Space—what are *they*? Are *they* real—or are they nonentities, having no absolute existence apart from our own Consciousness? We know there is One who is not affected by them, and to whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years. Are we not told also, that “in Him we live, and move, and have our being?”

X.

LOVE AND DUTY.

AN INCIDENT IN A LIFE.

MARY FLEMING I first knew many years ago—it may be twelve or fifteen. At all events, I was very little more than a boy, and she was a girl, joyous, and wayward when not indulged in her own fancies. She was not pretty, except for the character in her face and the occasional shadows that chased themselves across her expressive brow. She was not tall for her age, though lithe in figure, and somewhat awkward in her movements. But it was easy to see that a few years would make a great change in one so capable of development, and as yet so undeveloped. At this time she was in the very *diablerie* of girlhood—a wild, active, impetuous nature, always falling into mischief, and never so happy as when engaged in some adventure or frolic. Reckless myself, and fond of the display of any piquancy which suited my own impatience of restraint, I was charmed by her ready and lively precocity. I could see that in a few years, when her girlhood had deepened into womanhood, her life would be unquiet.

A little after she had first attracted my attention she was sent to a boarding-school in the neighbourhood of London. I strove to talk with her on the few occasions on which I met her, but her quick raillery threw me aside. The mere act of living was deep enjoyment to her, and into it she threw herself heart and soul. Some years passed away before Mary returned from school to her home. I, who had not forgotten her, was naturally anxious to see how she had grown up. I found her fair and graceful—a perfect maiden in mien and bearing. She was self-composed, without being stiff; sparkling and agreeable, without any obtrusiveness. Her auburn hair floated freely over her broad brow, and in her full grey eyes there lay a light of tenderness and passion, which received additional strength from the sensitive curl of her finely-formed mouth. Much of her unconsciousness had passed away; and yet, when with any one with whom she sympathized, her fresh and natural feeling welled up to overflowing. She was gifted with a large fund of humour, and we spent many an hour in satirizing all who came across our path—joking, and unveiling to one another, in badinage, the salient points of our respective characters—all in fun! I sought her society ardently, but was unsuccessful in seeing her as often as I wished. This increased the desire to be with her. Oh, mothers! How little you know that the young man whom you are so careful your daughter should not meet is the very one—because of the prohibition, partly—they are most anxious of all others to see! Difficulties were thrown in our way, but I ingratiated myself with the whole family after a little; and, though I could not see Mary every day in the week, yet we frequently came together at one another's houses, in places of public resort, and sometimes I joined her as she rode on her black mare through the country. Before we had time to reflect, it was plain that, in following out the instinctive leadings of our hearts, Mary

became more thoroughly acquainted with me, and I with her, than any deliberate attempt could possibly have made us. Through some hidden sympathy or affinity of temperament, we had advanced so far that my affections became seriously involved. I loved Mary deeply, and I perceived that, for my future happiness, it was essential she should be mine. At first sight this was easy enough, for I was her equal in birth and position; but we were both very young—foolishly young, as it might have been thought. I was, also, a third son, and my income would depend in a great measure on my success in my professional life. Such being my position, I felt it impossible to make to Mary those honourable offers which, under other circumstances, I should not have hesitated to have put forward. In my youthful imagination she appeared to me to be so high and splendid, that the comparative intimacy which I enjoyed with her seemed almost overwhelming in its condescension. I determined to marry her at the right time, and to content myself, for the present, with improving the acquaintance so happily begun. We had many pleasant rides and country walks—for Driffield was a pretty, rural spot, in the centre of England. Many happy evenings passed together—many glad meetings, and sad partings till we met again. Mary's voice was thoroughly charming. She had been taught by an eminent master, and it was her great delight to sing an Irish or Scotch ballad, accompanied by her sisters and brother. Her voice was a *soprano*, relieved from being too shrill by a lingering tone of exquisite tenderness. I could have listened for ever as she sang her favourite airs from Donizetti; for she entered most vividly into the spirit of Italian music, and touched the keys with a passionate gesture. At times there came a light into her eyes, and her whole countenance glowed with rapture.

How often have I lingered over those notes in the happy days gone by! and how little she knew how manageable and weak I became beneath the spell of her voice! She soon became acquainted with my favourite pieces, and she sang them with a shade more of the power and richness which entered into everything she touched. But the sojourn of the Flemings at Driffield was limited. They were about to be scattered. Mary was to go on the Continent with her parents and younger brother; and Ronald Fleming, the eldest son, was starting for Edinburgh, to join his regiment, quartered in that city; for the Flemings were a Scotch family, but Mrs. Fleming was an Irishwoman. They had taken up their abode at Driffield in order to be near certain relatives of Mr. Fleming's who lived in the neighbourhood. Though I longed to secure so rich a prize as Mary before her departure, and though I had sufficient experience that she was adapted to fulfil all that my nature required—all of help, and sweetness, and comfort—yet I still continued firm to my original resolution of asking no promise from her. To gain her love, and to render myself worthy of it, seemed to me most properly to be the object towards which I should strive, and one which

would sink in value were it obtained at the cost of a slender struggle and sacrifice. The thought of winning her hung like a bright star over my future. It was the morning star of hope, which was to shed a mellowed radiance on the evening of my days. Life was dark or bright according as that star shone fair or clouded. It was a desperate risk to suffer her to leave Driffield, and not to speak those words of love which clamoured for utterance. Had I done so I should have been rejected—for Mary was very young. She did not love me yet. She was anxious to see other countries; and to settle down as a wife and a mother at so early an age, when life was just opening upon her with all its marvels and its new-found excitements, would have been an arrangement to which she would have denied her consent. The whole weight, too, of Mary's family would have been against me. They were naturally proud of her, and thought she was destined to be the bride of some rich or distinguished man. Of one thing, however, I felt sure—that we were born for one another; and though at this time she did not reciprocate the feeling I had for her in all its depth, yet she regarded me with respect, confidence, and affection, which time and opportunity might have intensified and exalted. I might mention many circumstances to show that such was the case: they come crowding on the memory, and though trivial, most of them, yet they are sufficiently strong witnesses to the truth of that which requires little testimony beyond mere feeling. I well remember the day on which I bade Mary good-bye. I found her in the orchard behind her house—a favourite resort of mine. She was sitting at the foot of a tree, and reading in "Childe Harold" the wondrous descriptions of what she was so soon to see. The sweet sunshine was falling graciously around her in bright patches, and the boughs above were rustling to the gentle music of the autumn air, as I stood at a little distance, and, unheeded, watched the form and features I loved so well. For the last time I watched that play of countenance which was always so charming and attractive—those delicate pencilings of the finely-chiselled mouth and arched eyebrows. Mary spoke with great delight of going abroad, and I was happy in the thought that she would enjoy herself. She hoped that she would see me soon again. She did not know how she would get on without me to talk to, to advise her, and to explain to her all that she was so soon to see; and I as little knew how I was to live without meeting her. How I wished that I could have accompanied her! What deep gratification to travel in her society—to learn from her all that she could teach me, and to give to her of my fullness which did not weary her! That interview I would have prolonged for ever. It had all the preciousness of last words. It occurred to me casually, at the moment, that I should take advantage of the opportunity, and risk my fortune on a single throw of the dice; but such a thought had no permanence—my sanguine nature leaped lightly forward to the return of the Flemings to Driffield, and closed with all the reality of renewed intimacy and love. At parting I took her gentle hand, and,

holding it quietly, I said, "Mary, you won't forget me, will you?" "Never, never!" she answered—and a turn in the shrubbery-walk hid her from my view.

Driffield was a lonely place to me after the Flemings had left. I took a sad pleasure in dwelling on the well-remembered words of her who, to me, was all the world. I missed that perfect comprehension which never misinterpreted me, and which is the highest pleasure we can hope to reach. I no longer enjoyed that complete "accord" of mind which was ours whenever my eyes met Mary's: she saw my thought at a glance, and at her look my spirit comprehended hers. We understood each other perfectly.

Many months glided on, and I heard nothing of Mary except now and then a stray word, when one morning I received intelligence through a friend which smote me to the earth, and withered the pleasant gourd of my hopes and anxieties—Mary was *fiancée* to another! It would be impossible now to tell the anguish which these tidings caused me. Life seemed to give way before them, and the first quick sense of desolation was succeeded by an exceeding bitterness, which had no language but a cry of dreariness and loss. The world to me was deprived of its chiefest joy, and every bright and pleasant object wore a sickly, hateful aspect. My ideal Future lay shattered on the ground. It was a foolish joy to busy myself in collecting the scattered fragments in a vain endeavour to rebuild its fair palaces. For a time I became nervous, irritable, living carelessly, without any keen interest in active duties—all my once buoyant nature weeping over the shipwreck of my love. I hung about the spots we used to frequent; I vowed that I would never care for any one else, and thought my lot the hardest in existence. I blamed myself cruelly for not having been more energetic while my opportunity lasted, but her I did not blame. I could not do that. Dispassionately considered, if that were possible, she had no reason to act otherwise than she did. My folly consisted in imagining that she would remember me as I remembered her; that, as I would admit no other image into my heart, it was possible she would be faithful to mine. I could fancy no one else; and though Mary had her faults, yet they were few, and belonged to her immaturity, with which they died. Her absence, and the fact that I had so long dwelt on the idea of possessing her as my own, gave the subject, perhaps, an exaggerated importance. It had taken root as an idea in my mind, and had become part of myself; and, when harassed or gloomy, it was my delight to draw forth from the *répertoire* of the mind that vision of future years, when the sunshine of her presence would break over my heart desolated with the rains and storms of youth. And it was a happy anticipation—one that kept my ambition high and my aims pure—one that made life real, and kept the future bright without a cloud. How slowly the hours sped their way to the one blessed consummation, to the dawning of the day of perfect earthly rest! Too soon that day, so fervently

wished for, was succeeded by a sudden night. It had shone brightly from a distance through storm and calm. Its light had illumined many dark thoughts and many hours of anxiety, when suddenly it went out, and left me alone with grief and loss. Slowly I recovered from this stunning and tremendous blow. Time accomplished for me what care and anxiety could not do. Silently and unconsciously, as it were, it deadened the overmastering sense of darkness and loneliness. I commenced to regain something of my wonted gaiety and glad buoyancy. To be happy ceased to be a profanity,—my interest in others began to return. I endeavoured to think of Mary as of one dead—one whom I must forget. I did not wish to hear of her. I shrank from the mention of her name. Matters continued in this state for some time. I continued to regain mental strength, and to improve daily. Just then my father fell into delicate health. He was advised to try the Clifton baths, and I was selected to accompany him there. We had been there a few weeks, when one Sunday, in church, judge of my astonishment to see Mary enter the building with her parents and brother. My first thought after the surprise, which I could scarcely think a pleasant, and yet was not an unpleasant one, was, she is Mary Fleming still! Though wishing to do so, I did not escape her notice. I felt hurt to think that I was passed by for another, and my first determination was never to see, nor to visit or associate with the Flemings, and I hurried home from church agitated by conflicting feelings. But the very next day such a resolution was sorely shaken. I met Mr. Fleming walking on the Downs. His manner was cordial and free, and he warmly invited me to visit them, and make myself at home with them. We were both strangers in the place, he said, and he was glad to meet an old friend. I saw at once that a fresh trial was at hand. Had it been possible for me to have left Clifton, I would have done so. It was plain that we must meet, and perhaps often. To have avoided them would have been to exhibit ill-feeling—to betray my own pique, and vanity. My first visit was a painful moment for me; for all the past came rushing through my memory. I could not but feel that the circumstances under which I met Mary were strange and trying. I was glad to see her—hear her voice again. I was not insensible to a certain curiosity about one who had created in me so extraordinary an interest; and yet it was sure to be a temporary pleasure, which I would afterwards pay dearly for. I found her quite unchanged—more so than I ever expected. All her old freshness and ease of manner remained, and that native grace which threw such a charm around her, and drew me towards her magnetically. There was a smile always ready to break over her classical features, which otherwise were sad, even through her smile. At times a whole wealth of *tristesse* lay in her expression, which I never could account for, and about which I was delicate to inquire. In her society I soon felt at ease; and notwithstanding her position, she was not insensible to a certain pleasure which she experienced with me. I amused her—helped her to pass the

time till Mr. Caird's return, who had gone on a diplomatic mission to South America; or the memory of former days gave me acceptance with her. We soon met frequently—perhaps too frequently for her pleasure, but not for mine. Old days were revived—the old, happy days—save for the sense that she belonged to another. Sometimes this sense was forgotten; but in calm moments it returned with vividness, and soured the pleasure which I drew from her society. Mary had a true and instinctive insight into all that was honourable and noble in human nature. She abhorred meanness and falsehood, and often lamented the paucity of true and high-principled men who preferred the rugged paths of duty to self-interest. And though she was lazy in her observation, yet she was keen to detect the bad as well as the attractive side of the characters of those with whom she was brought into contact. As I have said, we met often and talked much together. At times a deep and dark temptation assailed me to disclose to Mary all I felt concerning her. It cost a severe struggle on one or two occasions not to do so. It would have been an unspeakable gratification to me to have told her all that lay hidden so long, and festered within for want of sympathy. The old trust which she still reposed in me gave me peculiar facilities for doing so, which it would have been brutal to have availed myself of. No good result could have attended such a course; for though Mary respected, liked, and was, in a measure, interested by me, yet I was her friend—nothing more. Her heart was tenanted by another. I dared not act the selfish part of gratifying a morbid fancy while I caused her pain and trouble. Had I unclosed my deep fountains of grief, the current of our glad intercourse would have run in poisoned waters. She would have been miserable in my company, and I would have been miserable were I not making her miserable with it. It was nobler to repress the fires which consumed while they irradiated, than to suffer them to break forth desolatingly. I resolved that, come what would, I would not do so—that I would suffer, and spare her. The possibility, however, that she would know more of my true position towards her before she left Clifton haunted my mind. It relieved me from despair; but I was determined that the knowledge of it should not come to her through me, directly or indirectly. My sanguine temperament told me at times of hope that all would be well; that instrumentalities would arise in some way or other to resettle our lots, without any violent disturbance, or breach of duty. My business was to act as Mary thought of me—as a friend. To appear as a lover would have violated every article of friendship, and would have degraded me in her pure eyes. It would have been a stab in the dark to one who was absent, and a gross insult to her high and noble nature. Beneath a chill and dignified exterior, Mary, in heart, overflowed with natural feeling and genuine warmth. Her girlish glee, her womanly enthusiasm, her quaintness, drew me towards her. She was my ideal. Based on an affectionate and really noble disposition, she had

a keen taste for mirth and amusement ; but, like all happy natures, she was not without her seasons of deepest depression. Reverses with her took the place of fatalities, and after battling bravely with them to a certain point, she gave up quietly, and endured. When the blow was past, her recovery to her former cheerfulness, if slow, was sure.

The state of my father's health being much improved, our sojourn at Clifton drew to a close, and I became more than ever anxious to be with Mary constantly. Day succeeded to day, and week to week ; but not till the train was bearing me away could I feel that Mary never would be mine. I had gained the victory over my selfish wish to spread ointment over my remorse by inflicting pain upon her. I do not say that few would have done the same—I trust that many would, and many do, daily. I know, however, that the means at my disposal were ample and varied ; that had I informed her of my trouble during our last walk on that fatal Clifton Hill, no one would ever have known of it but herself. No stranger would have intermeddled with the bitterness which such an avowal would have cost her. I could not do it. She did not hear my story, and I escaped the additional remorse of wounding her who had ever regarded me kindly, truly, affectionately. I had nothing to accuse myself of. There was no sting in the happy memory of those happy days ; for though it may have been done faintly and falteringly, yet I acted the high and honourable part—crushing my own feelings “like a vice upon the threshold of the brain.” There is left to me the sweet memory of the past—an imperishable fragrance ! The trivial incidents—the unimportant words—the looks—the voices of bygone times, have vanished from the recollection. Time, which mars our best and dearest, has laid its cold finger on them too, but it can never touch what has been incorporated in the life and character. Our greatest sorrows may be blessings in disguise, for sorrow makes us wise ; and when the clouds have discharged their fury, and the storm has swept by, there comes the sunshine after rain, the calm ambrosial air which finds us on the mountain side of life, gentler, firmer, more exalted. To have learnt a sorrow's power for good is no valueless experience—to know the sweetness of chastened resignation—to have been able to say, even in the night and cold, “Father, Thy will be done !” compensates—more than compensates—for the pains of despair, and crowns the brow with a radiance won from suffering and endurance.

Two lines express all that lies in the heart :—

“’Tis better to have loved and lost,
Than never to have loved at all.”

THE CAROLLERS.

UNDERNEATH my window,
 Where the snow lies white,
 I can hear sweet voices
 Singing in the night :
 As the night-wind varies,
 So they rise and fall,
 In this quaint old carol
 Joining one and all—

“ In the East a grey light
 Prophesies the morn ;
 Up—and hail the daylight—
 Christ the Lord is born ! ”

Ah, that quaint old carol,
 Well its words I know,
 First sung in the village
 Long—long years ago !
 In the growing daylight,
 Many a time and oft,
 Have the dark woods rendered
 Back its burden soft—

“ In the East a grey light
 Prophesies the morn ;
 Up—and hail the daylight—
 Christ the Lord is born ! ”

As a child how often,
 Till the midnight dim,
 Have I waked and waited
 For that Christmas hymn :—
 Heard the footsteps coming,
 Heard them stop beneath ;—
 For the burst of music
 Watched with bated breath ;—

“ In the East a grey light
 Prophesies the morn ;
 Up—and hail the daylight—
 Christ the Lord is born ! ”

THE CAROLLERS.

Simple words of wisdom !

“ Christ the Lord is born :
Up then—and be doing
On the Christmas morn !
Up—and raise the fallen !
Up—and aid the poor !
Keep for all your fellows
Open heart and door !

“ In the East a grey light
Prophesies the morn ;
Up—and hail the daylight—
Christ the Lord is born !

“ Up !—if one have wronged thee,
Be the wrong forgiven !
Up !—if any love thee,
Render thanks to Heaven !”
So my heart interprets
This old melody,
That beneath my window
Voices sing to me !—

“ In the East a grey light
Prophesies the morn ;
Up—and hail the daylight—
Christ the Lord is born !”

THOMAS HOOD.

SAILORS' HOMES.

I KNOW no greater proof of the huge size to which this metropolis has attained than is afforded by the fact that vast numbers of its inhabitants are practically ignorant of its being a shipping-port. They may, it is true, have read or been told that such is the case; they may even have heard that London stands first with respect to the value of its annual imports; that a greater number of ships arrives here during the year than at any other port; and that, somewhere down the river, there are immense docks for the reception of these ships. But, for the most part, this to them is hearsay knowledge. They are only imperfectly acquainted with the fact; they themselves have not experienced its truth; they have no personal knowledge that London is, what it is, the greatest shipping port of the world. Most towns have a distinctive physiognomy. At Manchester, who can fail to observe that he is in the centre of the great industrial movement of the age? Liverpool possesses unmistakable signs of being altogether a commercial town; at Brighton, Scarborough, or any watering-place, the inhabitants may with justice be classed under two heads—those, namely, whose object is enjoyment, and those whose duty it is to administer to that enjoyment; in agricultural districts, the aspect of each town is characteristic—every man you meet may answer to the name of Hodge. London alone is an exception. It is in London alone we can discover no special physiognomy. Like the chameleon, the modern Babylon has many colours; its complexion appears of a totally different character to various individuals. It is a world, and contains within itself many other worlds. The man of letters sees in it the only fit theatre for his exertions; the politician and the professional man think of it as the head-quarters of the Legislature and the source of preferment; the tradesman and merchant look upon it as a vast mart for the ready disposal of their wares; the man of fashion regards it as the emporium of every thing that can minister to his pleasures or gratify his passions. It is, in fact, an aggregate mass composed of so many ingredients, that the predominance of none is particularly observed;—the ideas formed of London are as varied as men's dispositions.

There is, probably, at this moment, a larger number of seamen in London than at any other port in the world. Few of them, however, are seen in our streets. West of Temple Bar they rarely come; there are none in Regent Street; Pall Mall knows them not; who ever meets a blue-jacket in St. James's Street? Yet, they are to be found. Their habitat is in the East. Now, by the East I do not mean anywhere in the neighbourhood of the Bank. It is out of the City altogether: further even than Whitechapel or Spitalfields. The East to which I allude is beyond those places. It is in Shadwell, or Limehouse, or Poplar, or Stepney, that Jack sets up his lares and lemures. And this East is a world to itself—a world that can scarce be equalled elsewhere. There

you will see natives of all lands—specimens of every race under heaven: dusky bands of turbaned Hindoos; men from without the Ganges; Chinese and Japanese; natives of the isles of the Pacific; Negroes; Yankees; Europeans of every country; and, lastly, British sailors collected from all parts of the empire—rough men, mostly—men who, in the matter of personal appearance, differ in very many respects from those we are accustomed to meet in Regent Street or Pall Mall—men whose skins have been tanned and bronzed by an equatorial sun, in realms

“Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile;”

or whose exteriors bear traces of hardships undergone—

“In climes beyond the solar road,
Where shaggy forms o’er ice-built mountains roam.”

The women that one finds hereabouts are of the lowest social caste. They are Amazonian Venuses—with more of the Amazon than the Venus. Few of them, indeed, but carry on their features marks of encounters in which they have, at some time, been engaged. But they carry also trophies of victories they have achieved; *spolia opima*, in the shape of India kerchiefs, numerous rings, chains, watches, and portraits of the enemy set in immense brooches, and worn conspicuously on the person.

To the sailor, of whatever country, on finding himself here for the first time, it must seem as if all things were expressly meant for his benefit or gratification. No sooner is he ashore, than men accost him, and, although they probably have never seen him before, offer him spirits, promise to lend him money if he has not yet received his wages, and, feeling a high regard for him and anxious for his welfare, take him to lodgings “where everything is comfortable, and of the best sort.” Very often these kind friends even go down as far as Gravesend to meet the homeward-bound, and be of any little service they can; but that is not always the case. So long, however, as Jack has ready money, or there is money due for past services or can be raised on the strength of future exertions, he has his friends. All are ready to serve him. Shops will supply him with clothes, will cash his advance-notes, will accommodate him in any way. Women put on their best smile for him; men are ready to laugh at his jokes and do his bidding; all are his slaves—so long as the money lasts! That in general is but a short time; sometimes it goes all in one night, and Jack is reduced to beggary. The people with whom he lodges rob him; the people whose public-house he frequents rob him; women rob him; crimps and bullies rob him; even before he came within sight of land they had been on the watch to take advantage of his position; and now, having planned his destruction from afar, they have him in their power, and—he must suffer the consequences.

The only defence he has against these dangers lies in those noble institutions—SAILORS’ HOMES: these are his only Sanctuary!

The first Sailors’ Home in this country was instituted in the year 1830,

and owes its origin to the philanthropic exertions of two Captains in the Royal Navy—Gambier and Elliot. These worthy men, whilst engaged, in the winter of 1827, in establishing an Asylum for the relief of sailors, became convinced that the destitute condition of so many of them principally arose from the want of some decent lodging-house to which they might resort when in Port; where their wages might be safe from plunder; where what they did not require for their own use might be deposited in a Savings' Bank, or transmitted to their relatives; and where they might be in the way of providing themselves with employment without the intervention of crimps.* Just at this time the Brunswick Theatre, which was situated near the London Docks, fell to the ground. The site was considered by Captains Gambier and Elliot as most desirable for the object they had in view. With the co-operation of friends, but principally with their own money, they purchased the ground and the old materials, for the purpose of building on the spot such a lodging-house as they contemplated, for the exclusive use of seamen. The first stone was laid in June, 1830, and the building—after many interruptions and much opposition from those who supposed themselves interested in perpetuating the vice and misery of sailors—was at length completed by May-day, 1835, and then opened for the reception of 100 men. From time to time, as funds could be procured, fresh additions were made and increased accommodation provided, and now, upwards of 300 boarders can be comfortably accommodated in the building.

The situation of the Home was well chosen. It is in Well Street, and the locality in which it stands is one of the worst in all London. It will be enough to say, that the upper end of the street runs into Rosemary Lane—the lower conducts into Ratcliffe Highway. Within a few minutes' walk of the front door of the Home are thirty licensed public-houses (six of which are gin-palaces) and fourteen beer-shops. Many of these public-houses have rooms attached to them in which every inducement is held out to allure and entrap the sailor. By night, music, dancing, drinking, keep him in a constant state of reckless excitement, and prevent him from perceiving the designs of evil companions (of both sexes) who are on the alert to rob him of his hard-earned wages. By day the "bars" are filled and the doors thronged by the same parties, engaged in the same pursuit, and the law at present seems to be incompetent to prevent the evils to which our young and thoughtless seamen are exposed in these dens.† To such places the Sailors' Home offers a marked contrast in every respect. It affords them comfortable quarters at a moderate price, and protects them from the long-established system of extortion and imposition to which they are liable elsewhere.‡

* Rear Admiral Sir W. E. Parry.

† "Report of the Well Street Sailors' Home," for 1854.

‡ To what an extent this system is carried on may be learned from the fact that on one occasion, at Portsmouth, when H.M.S. Raleigh was paid off, "seven of

The building is very commodious. The Basement contains the kitchen; a refreshment-room, for boarders that arrive too late for the regular meals in the dining-hall; a storekeeper's provision-room; hot and cold baths; store-rooms, for the effects of absent seamen, many of whom, on going home or proceeding to sea, leave a portion of their clothes, &c., in the care of the Institution. In the back yard there is a very good skittle-ground.

The Ground-floor contains the waiting-hall; two dormitories; and the offices for manning and discharging ships, established by the Board of Trade. In the *Shipping Office*, shipowners and masters have an opportunity of selecting their crews, and sailors can choose their ships and the particular voyage on which they wish to engage. In the *Discharging Office*, crews of British ships, on their return from foreign voyages, receive their wages in the presence of a shipping-master, by whom their accounts are examined. In the *Cashier's Office*, all money transactions with reference to the boarders are carried on. To encourage men to lodge their money at the time they receive it, every facility is afforded for its withdrawal, in any sums, till five o'clock, p.m. Here their tradesmen's bills, &c., are examined and paid, and they are invited to deposit a portion of their money in the Seamen's Savings' Bank; * and, when leaving London to visit friends, instead of carrying large sums with them, they can receive Money Orders without expense at their places of destination. Each man has a separate account in the ledger, in which every amount is entered. From a return of the pecuniary transactions at the "Home" for the last nineteen years, we learn, that during the year ending 30th April, 1860, there were 8,225 accounts opened in the ledger; that the total amount of sailors' money received was £69,104; that of that sum £30,002 was remitted home; that £4,003 were invested in the Savings' Bank, and £35,099 drawn out, by seamen. The building contains ten dormitories. There are two storeys of cabins in each dormitory, the upper row being reached by a stair and gallery; each cabin is provided with a wooden or iron bedstead, with a coir mattress, pillow, two blankets, two sheets and a rug. Each dormitory has a lavatory. The central part of the first floor is appropriated as a Dining-Hall, but used also as a sitting-room, where draughts, &c., are played, and where there is no objection to the men regaling themselves with their pipes. Adjoining this hall is the Reading-Room, containing a line-of-battle ship's library (250 volumes), presented by the Lords' Commissioners of the Admiralty; and a selection of books, presented to the Institution or purchased by it. The wings of

the men were charged £102 for three days' entertainment at a low public-house, one item being £6 2s. for two hours' ride in an omnibus; and a messmate who came to breakfast with them was compelled to pay 17s. 4d. for two eggs, some salt beef, and a cup of coffee."

* Money Orders are issued and paid, and Savings' Banks established, at Shipping Offices at all ports in the United Kingdom, under the supervision of the Board of Trade.

this floor, as well as the whole of the second floor, are devoted to dormitories. The Third-floor contains two dormitories; a school, under the superintendence of the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education, where Navigation, &c., is taught to seamen at a trifling charge; and a Museum containing upwards of thirty models of various vessels, from the Indian canoe to the ship of the line. A course of lectures is given here in the winter season.*

Connected with the "Home" are offices for the entry of seamen into the "Royal Naval Reserve;" and so successful have been the efforts of the shipping-master and his staff, that since the formation of the "Reserve," on the 1st of January, 1860, to the 30th April, 1861, 545 have been enrolled, "a large proportion of whom are valuable seamen, who, having cheerfully undergone the necessary drill, will, it is hoped, be found ready and willing to come forward when their services may be required." The Directors in their latest Report, however, state, that occasionally there is difficulty in manning merchant ships, and they are under the impression that the number of British able seamen is gradually diminishing. They account for this partly because of the small number of apprentices that have of late been received into the merchant service—partly through the temptations which the Gold-fields, the Colonies, and some Foreign Flags have offered to our men—and partly from other causes. They are of opinion that the ties which unite the sailor to his native land would be much strengthened and increased if the "Merchant Seamen's Fund" were re-established "under Government control, on a firm and secure basis."

The Regulations respecting terms, respecting conduct, and respecting hours, are good. Men pay at the rate of 14s. a week for living at the Institution; ordinary seamen and apprentices, under twenty years of age, 12s. a week: this includes washing. Morning Prayers are held in the public-room at half-past seven o'clock throughout the year; and Evening Prayers at ten o'clock, punctually and regularly. The street-door is closed at eleven o'clock nightly: but boarders wishing to remain out after that hour are admitted by a "pass" from the Superintendent. It may be mentioned, also, that adjoining the Home is the Seamen's Church, with 800 seats set apart for the sailors of the port of London.

Since the opening of the Institution, in 1835, it has received 121,441 seamen, of whom 35,038 have been old or returned boarders.

For some time this was the only Sailors' Home in Britain. At length, in 1841, a Private Home, costing somewhere about £10,000, was opened at Poplar, by Mr. Green—in the first instance, for the use of the officers and seamen employed in his fine fleet, and afterwards for all European seamen who choose to avail themselves of its advantages. At first it was not well patronised, and its prospects were discouraging; but ultimately it has become a success; for although, like every other "Home," it does

* Report for 1860.

not pay its own expenses, it may be considered prosperous, since it is mostly filled, and sometimes is unable to accommodate all who come. In connection with it is a Shipping Office, which, like all other shipping offices, is under Government control; every other department, however, is under the exclusive management of the owners.

Liverpool, Dublin, and other ports, soon followed London in the establishment of "Homes"—and now, in addition to these two, there are altogether, in ENGLAND, Fifteen such Institutions—one, namely, at each of the following places:—

Bristol,	Gloucester,	North Shields,
Cardiff,	Great Yarmouth,	Plymouth,
Devonport,	Hull,	Portsmouth,
Dover,	Liverpool,	Sunderland,
Falmouth,	Milford,	Southampton.

IRELAND has Five, viz.—

Belfast,	Dublin,	Queenstown.
Cork,	Limerick,	—

And SCOTLAND Four, viz.—

Glasgow,	Leith,	Greenock,	Stornoway.
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All these Institutions are managed much in the same way as that at Well Street, though, of course, most of them are conducted on a much smaller scale than the original, and some even have no separate building in which to locate themselves.

But not only have we a "Home" for those who can afford to pay: there is, also in Well Street, adjoining that noble Institution and in connection with it, a *Destitute Sailors' Asylum*, the object of which is to supply shelter, food and clothing, to distressed seamen of all nations, and to assist them to obtain employment. Since its establishment, in 1827, Thirty-nine thousand One hundred and Thirty-six men have been relieved by it, and preserved from the state of extreme misery and want in which many sailors—suffering from shipwreck, sickness and disease, exposure and privations at sea, injuries received in the Queen's service, increasing years and growing infirmities, imposition, or their own improvidence—were to be seen before such a Refuge was provided for them. Now, all that is required before a man is admitted is, some guarantee of his being a *bonâ fide* sailor, and his wants are supplied. The men's stay at the Asylum depends on the peculiarity of their circumstances, and varies as the necessity of their cases may require. Many seamen get into employment by means of the Institution, and recover themselves so far as not to require its assistance on their return to the port. Sick men, when it is practicable and necessary, are got into the hospitals and infirmaries, and while there are supplied with tea, sugar, and other necessaries not allowed by the regulations of those charities; while, on the other hand, a discharge ticket from the Dreadnought Hospital-ship at Deptford, or any other

hospital, is a passport for a man into the Asylum without a question being asked. And, whilst recruiting his health here, attempts are made, and often, it is believed, with success, to improve his spiritual condition. For the time, at least, he has no choice between right and wrong; but must keep himself sober, clean, and orderly, and come in the way of the appointed ordinances of religion. The Asylum depends entirely on voluntary subscriptions.

THE STRANGERS' HOME FOR ASIATICS, AFRICANS, AND SOUTH SEA ISLANDERS, in the West India Dock Road, Limehouse, is another Institution of similar character and with similar aims. It was opened in 1857 by the Prince Consort, and is designed expressly for the benefit of Asiatic sailors and every class of Orientals who come to England. None are admitted into the Home without payment, but the terms are on so moderate a scale as to exclude few; and the advantages are so great to a class of men who must of necessity, even more than European sailors, be liable to the numberless impositions practised upon the unwary, that it is to be hoped the Institution will become permanent. For 8s. a week each Lascar is supplied with three meals a day, medical attendance, baths, washing, &c., so that he need have no other necessary outlay but to furnish himself with clothing—and the means of doing this are provided by the establishment of a store-room on the premises. Male and Female Asiatic servants are charged 10s. 6d., whilst casual lodgers may get a bed for 3d., a bath for 2d., breakfast or supper for 3d., and dinner for 5d.

During the year 1860, 213 Asiatics, Africans, and South Sea Islanders were lodged and boarded in the house—the average attendance being 25. Beds were also provided and paid for by 75 casual lodgers; 33 destitute Asiatics were taken off the streets, besides 43 sent to the Home under instructions from the Council of India. Lascars to the number of 139 were shipped during the year, and 41 returned in ships belonging to parties by whom they were brought to this country.

Previous to the establishment of this Home, the men for whose benefit it is chiefly designed, unable to find admission into respectable places, were inveigled into low lodging-houses and opium-smoking dens in the neighbourhood of the docks, and plundered of their savings, stripped of their clothes, and then turned into the streets in a deplorably miserable condition. Hundreds of Asiatics habitually obtained their livelihood by begging; many died in their miserable lodgings, and some even in the streets. Now, they gladly avail themselves of a Home where they are protected from imposition—where their money is taken charge of—where they may obtain advice and information—where there are facilities to obtain employment, and where they are provided with secular and religious instruction. Through the exertions of the officers of the Home, every opium-smoking room and a large number of disreputable lodging-houses in various parts of London have been closed; every Asiatic crimp has been induced to return to his native country, and 290 Asiatic beggars

have been removed from the streets, besides 129 who have been shipped at good wages from workhouses and prisons.* Lieutenant-Colonel R. M. Hughes, who takes a most active interest in the Institution, is the Hon. Secretary, and is always ready to afford information to those who require it; the Superintendent will be happy to show the building to visitors.

The "Home," however, is not intended for Lascars alone. Accommodation, with every comfort and convenience, is provided for all classes of Orientals. On the occasion of my visit, I had the pleasure of meeting there Rissalder Shere Sing, late of the 1st Oude Irregular Cavalry, who makes it his abode whilst in England;—a brave and loyal old soldier is this Rissalder, and one who deserves well of this country for having served it in its late hour of trial in India.†

None in this country should be indifferent regarding the condition of our Seamen. Time has been when the security of the country depended on the efficiency of its sailors, and the time may come when it will have again to do so; the prosperity of the kingdom is intimately connected with the success of its commercial transactions. In distant parts of the world, much depends on the character of our seamen. We may send out some estimable Scotch nobleman as England's representative, but far-off lands will not judge of us, or our civilization, by Scotch noblemen. They will measure us by our sailors—those *avant-couriers* of our race. There can be little doubt that much of the misunderstanding that exists amongst the Chinese, and such other people, with respect to this country, arises from the fact of their deriving their notions of England, and Englishmen in general, from our sailors. The latter are often improvident, irrational,

* From the last annual "Report" of the Home, it appears there are still in this country upwards of 200 Asiatics who gain their livelihood principally by begging. It may not be without interest to some readers to learn how they are distributed:—

In London there are about 50	Leeds	6	Wolverhampton ..	6	
Dublin	12	Halifax.....	3	Derby	5
Edinburgh	6	Lynn	6	Leicester	5
Liverpool	15	Norwich	7	West of England ..	10
Manchester	20	Yarmouth	3	South Coast, &c. ..	10
Birmingham	8	Preston	2	On the Tramp	30
Oxford	2				

† It was he who warned the Commissioner, when at Secrora, of the intention of the troops to mutiny, and afterwards helped to escort the ladies into Lucknow. He was with the detachment that murdered Captain Hayes, Lieutenant Barber, and Mr. Fayrer, near Mynpooree, when, separating himself from the mutineers, he brought in the bodies to that station for burial. He then went off on a mail-cart to warn other officers marching up the Grand Trunk Road, and to carry intimation of what had happened to Sir Henry Lawrence. He afterwards formed part of the garrison who so successfully defended the Residency at Lucknow—fought bravely in several actions under General Napier, and was present at the capture of Tantia Topee. It was "through his influence that the Sikh cavalry as a body did not desert during our defence."

drunken, barbarous, and easily imposed on. An ignorant people, supposing them to be genuine samples of our nation, naturally imagines all of us to be such characters, and, as a consequence, despises and insults us; and it requires no small amount of powder and perseverance to convince that people of the contrary.

Sailors, unlike men of most other professions, seldom or never become subject to the influences of home; they rarely cease sowing wild oats; are prodigals, and easily led into temptation. Could every sailor, however, on coming into port, be induced to enter and stay at a "Home," it would do much towards his reformation; and, although we must not expect the character of the seaman ever to become completely changed, we know that in these "Homes" we may safely rest a hope of his improvement. They will, I am assured, do much to remove that unfavourable opinion with which sea-faring men, whether in the Navy or the Merchant Service, are at present regarded, and will tend to place them more on a level with other professions. Mothers, and wives, and sisters will not have so great a dislike to their relatives proceeding to sea, when they are assured that they will find a comfortable "Home" at each port, where they are preserved from temptation—where in sickness and misfortune there are kind friends whose duty it is to minister to their comfort, and where higher objects than their temporal affairs are not neglected. At Well Street, all the officers seem to regard their duty as a pleasure. Anxious relatives are promptly replied to by the Secretary with respect to the absent; and it is gratifying to learn, from him, that many a sailor on returning from foreign voyage feels it his first duty to inquire for those letters "from the loved ones at home" which have been carefully preserved for him, and to reply to them himself.

To the worthy men who originated, and to those who carry on the good work, too much praise cannot be awarded. They who are the sailors' benefactors are the country's creditors, and every man in Britain is a participator in the debt of gratitude that is owing: and, thank God, these creditors are not few. Happily there is no lack of true benevolence in active exercise. From the moment when Captain Elliot stood amidst the ruins of the Brunswick Theatre, down to this hour, there have never been wanting those who are ready to give time, and money, and labour to the cause. Admiral Bowles, C.B., M.P., Admiral Gambier, Admiral Hope, the Hon. Capt. Maude, Capt. Barlow, Capt. Bazalgette, Lieut. Justice, Mr. Montague Gore, Mr. Chapman, and Capt. W. H. Hall, F.R.S. (who has devoted his time to the extension of the benefits of Sailors' Homes, and, in connection with the *Sailors' Homes Institution* in Craven Street, of which he is Managing Director, has effected a vast amount of good), are some of the gentlemen who have been active workers. Those who have assisted by good example and in a pecuniary way, are numerous. First amongst these are Her Gracious Majesty and His Royal Highness the Prince Consort, who seem fully impressed with the importance of the undertaking, and have been munificent patrons. His Grace the

Duke of Northumberland—"the sailor's fast friend"—who is ever foremost in all deeds of benevolence, has been a princely donor, and has, at his own expense, established and fitted up the South Shields Sailors' Home. At Cardiff, the Trustees of the Marquis of Bute have not only given the piece of ground for the "Home," but have also erected the building, with a church attached. The Messrs. Green, of Blackwall, as has been mentioned already, have themselves founded a "Home" at Poplar, and are generous contributors to the funds of others. The lists of donors and subscribers to the various Institutions are truly gratifying. Still, there is much to be done. None of the "Homes" is, as far as I am aware, self-supporting, and all attempts at raising the terms of admission to them must tend to diminish the number of those for whose benefit they are designed. To do this will be a misfortune to the nation at large. The public will, there can be no doubt, see the advantages of providing such "Homes" for a class of the community that is of such service to them, and will continue their support.

The value to England of her sailors is incalculable. To them, in an especial degree, are owing, under Providence, her material prosperity and moral greatness. To them she is indebted for the security she enjoys;—to them, that her flag is respected in every clime. Whether they belong to the naval or mercantile marine, it is for us these men "go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters;"—it is for us they endure the hardships and privations of long and perilous voyages;—it is for us they have to contend with deadly diseases and pestilential climates;—it is for us they subject themselves, in the howling winter-time, to the storm, to shipwreck, to death. The dangers and difficulties, however, to which the sailor is exposed whilst on sea, are those which belong to his calling, and which we are powerless to control: we cannot rule the winds, nor direct the storm; but when he comes on shore—

"The storms all weathered and the ocean crossed,"

we can do much for him. During the time he is afloat, he has so little necessity of thinking and acting for himself—of exercising his own judgment and decision, that, when he lands, on his return home, he is so reckless, so thriftless, so free-hearted and unsuspecting, that he, in a peculiar manner, is liable to the many and various temptations that beset the path of the thoughtless and careless. He knows not the humanizing influences of home society, and finds nothing to restrain his natural inclinations; but, on the contrary, too often, alas! enough to excite them. The claims he has upon his country's gratitude should not be overlooked. One way by which we can exhibit our sense of the benefits he confers upon us, is by looking after him when he is unable to take care of himself. Can this be done more effectually than by contributing to the funds of those "Homes" that have been already founded, and by giving every assistance we are able to render in the establishment of others?

THE POWER OF WATER.

WE have seen in the words of Professor Ansted (vol. i. page 155) the *Mysteries of Water*—the mystery of its composition from gaseous elements, the mystery of its expansion above and below one eventful temperature, the mystery of its circulation from ocean through cloud to earth, and from earth by streamlet, brook, and river, back to ocean: but we have thus only considered it as a phenomenon of marvels ministering in the general organization of the universe. It remains to view water—omnipresent in ever-varying form; in itself the very type of instability, in its action the most constant force in nature—in all its power as an applied agent of man.

In its more majestic natural forms, every perceptive being must recognise the Power of Water. When we see it in the dark, fire-flashing thunder clouds, spread like a leaden pall above us, and rolling in dread convolutions across a threatened land, the mind receives the impression as evidence of the elemental power; while, of those who think at all, the boldest trembles in his secret heart at its grandeur. When the wide expanse of ocean stretches at our feet, surging against the massive rocks, in whose caverns it may have rung with echoes sublime in their monotony for countless myriads of years; when the eye passes to the far horizon, still meeting sea and only sea, and the mind, struggling to grasp the conception of a world-covering deep, shrinks astounded from the thought, feeling its own finality; then some faint idea of the power of water in the universe comes home to us, and still more a sense of the awful omnipotence of that great First Principle, at whose fiat this mighty ocean—ever restless, flowing and counterflowing—keeps its bounds; at whose beck it would submerge the globe, at whose nod it would be dried to its lowest depth. If in the gloaming we stray along the bank of some rippling stream, making continuous music at our feet as it kisses gently the lilies on its surface, or springs daintily from stone to stone, the sound of the water rises amidst the quiet like the whispering of angels at our side, and breathes of ceaseless constancy; the soul turns dreamingly to the foregone, ponders on the insignificance of man's life as compared with the never ending flow of the placid brook, accepts the water as a symbol of Eternity, and feels its power.

In these phases the power of water strikes the heart; but in its applied state, its every-day uses, the power, though equally stupendous, is too familiar to call forth more than perhaps a passing thought of its convenience to man. The three qualities in which that power is most utilised for purposes of civilization, are the faculty of rising to its own level, the quâquâversus pressure, and the extraordinary increase of volume when in a state of heated vapour.

That water finds its own level is a very old saying, and means, that, so long as water is confined in pipes, or otherwise, it will, if permitted by

the shape, rise throughout the system to the same height in every part. The reason of this is, that fluid columns exercise a pressure proportionate to their height, and not to their bulk, so that the thinnest column will sustain an equally tall column of any thickness. If water be poured into the thin end of a vessel shaped as in Fig. 1, it will rise to the same height (c) in the thick tube as it occupies at (A) in the thin one: in other words, the thin column (A B) balances a thick column of equal height (B c), (B) being the fulcrum; and if (B c) extended for any distance in a horizontal or undulating form, the small column (A B) would continue to balance the whole weight of water in the prolonged tube (B c) to a height corresponding with (A).

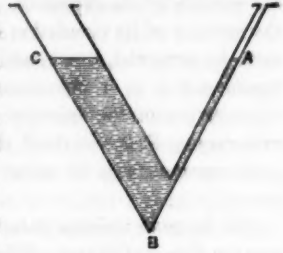


Fig. 1.

It is in virtue of this principle of fluids that the modern system of water-supply becomes practicable. On the highest ground adjoining the city to be supplied a reservoir is established, into which, if the water do not flow naturally, it is pumped by artificial means. If sufficient height cannot be obtained for the reservoir, it is procured, by the erection of a tall and very strong iron tube, which, kept filled with water, forms the commencement of the system, and corresponds with the thin column (A B) in Fig. 1. These curious-looking tubes, which usually share the appearance of a chimney and of an appallingly overgrown bamboo, must have often struck the reader's observation: one is to be seen at Nine Elms; two at Kew Bridge are visible for many miles round; and there are several at Thames Ditton, though there they have generally more ornamental shapes. The reservoir, or this lofty column of water, is then connected by pipes with the points at which the supply is required, and—no matter how great the intervening distance—the water in the pipes will flow upwards wherever it can to the same height above the sea-level as the surface of the reservoir or summit of the water-column.

London derives its water, in a small degree, from the New River, but, as is just, receives the main contribution from its own noble river, the Thames—the water being taken from the stream above Teddington Lock, and therefore where there is no possibility of metropolitan sewage driven upwards by returning tide affecting the purity of the supply. The water quits its parent at the pretty village of Thames Ditton, whence, after passing through gravel-beds, with several other sorts of filtration, it is forced, by the property of fluids which we are now considering, to take a twelve-mile journey to London through large iron pipes—mains from which the supply for streets and houses branches out on both sides in numerous ramifications. These mains are carried under ground, through the fields, or along the roads, and several of them across the Thames—some passing below the bed of the river, at Richmond—others having a bridge over it all to themselves, at Putney.

It is impossible to exaggerate the advantage conferred on a crowded town by this means of supplying water from any distance ;—the difference of level between two parts of a stream may be made use of ; a brook or a lake can be rendered available, although situated far from the town, and abundance of pure water may be brought to the most arid districts. For washing, drinking, and manufacturing purposes, the metropolis receives daily a mass of water which would represent a river of no inconsiderable dimensions.

The ancients were as sensible as ourselves of the advantages of bringing water from where it was abundant and comparatively useless, to where it was scarce and particularly needed, and they effected their object by means of magnificent aqueducts. Many of these stupendous works still remain to inspire posterity with wonder at the resources, perseverance, and engineering skill of races whose names live only in the page of history. Nothing of modern times can surpass, as far as they go, the solidity and boldness of the Aqua Appia, the beauty of those arches of the Aqua Marcia which still adorn the Campagna near the Frascati Road, while the aqueducts of Segovia and Nismes have never been excelled in architectural grandeur. The aqueduct, however, in relative cost, is as far more expensive than water-pipes as a railway is than the common road ; for, like the rail in its level way, the course of an aqueduct must be one regular incline along which the water shall flow ; and to obtain this result hills have to be tunnelled, streams bridged, and valleys crossed on rows of arches, often of colossal proportions. The pipe, on the other hand, being able to follow the direction of the ground, is unaffected by ascent or descent, provided it go no higher at any point than the starting reservoir. The aqueducts have the advantage over pipes that they usually conduct larger quantities of water than the latter can, whole streams being occasionally sent along them. Still, the difference of expense is so great that very few have been constructed in modern times, water pipes being ordinarily resorted to. The two most notable exceptions are the aqueduct of Lisbon, and above all the splendid Croton aqueduct, opened in 1842, which brings the Croton river 38 miles for the supply of New York, crossing *en route* the Haarlem river by arches 150 feet high ;—this aqueduct is computed to discharge sixty million gallons in every twenty-four hours.

We must not conclude that the ancients were unacquainted with this great law of fluids, because they made enormously expensive aqueducts instead of laying water-pipes, but rather that they were unable to resort to the latter expedient from their then inability to cast large metal tubes at any moderate cost. A water-pipe is necessarily a most solid, ponderous casting ; for, under the quâquâversus pressure next to be described, the lower portions of the pipes of a system of water-works are exposed to a bursting strain almost inconceivably intense.

To the same faculty of water for attaining a uniform level when

confined, we are indebted for those valuable aids to domestic comfort, Artesian wells, so named from the first having been tried at Artois. I say the first; but it should rather be called the first sunk on geological principles, for what are in effect Artesian wells have long been bored empirically in Austria and China. The theory of the Artesian well is as follows:—The strata of which the earth's surface is composed are frequently arranged in basins; that is, one stratum will sometimes be completely enclosed by the next lower stratum, which will crop to the surface all round it; the stratum again on which this second layer rests doing perhaps the same for it. If, now, the entirely-enclosed stratum and the lowermost stratum of all be impervious to moisture, while the intermediate stratum is porous, the latter will suck in all the rain falling on the part exposed at the surface, and the water thus received will flow through the pores of the soil towards the bottom of the basin, until the whole mass becomes completely charged with water. This charged stratum may now be tapped by boring, anywhere within the basin, through the confining impervious stratum at the top, to the water-bearing stratum underneath. Immediately this opening is afforded, the water will rise through it to a level with the high surrounding portions of its natural tank where they touch the surface. As a practical illustration of this principle, no better example can be given than that which is known as the London Basin.

Underlying the metropolis there is the thick bed of London clay, absolutely retentive of, and impervious to, moisture. A well sunk into this mass would be useless, as the clay will not part with its water. Below

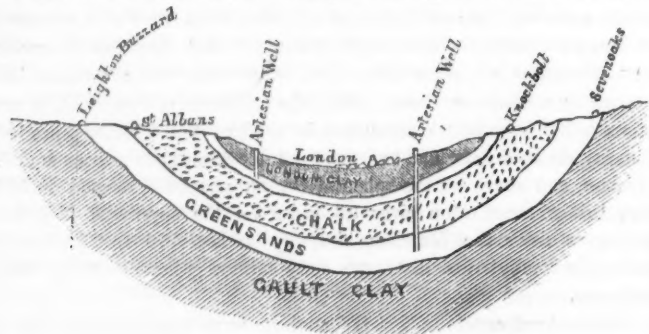


Fig. 2.

is a thin bed of plastic sand and clay, which is porous and yields water; but it is too thin to be of much importance. In its turn it is underlaid by cretaceous or chalk formations, which, though they afford water in meagre quantity and of very indifferent quality, are sufficiently dense to restrain the upward motion of water in any charged beds below. Underneath the chalk, however, we reach fine strata of greensand, charged with water, and kept in a condition of saturation from the resistance to moisture offered by the

impervious gault-clay beds on which they rest, and which enclose them in a basin on every side. This greensand appears on the surface near Sevenoaks to the east of London, and at Leighton Buzzard to the west, each of these places having a greater elevation than the capital. On an artesian well being bored through the clay and chalks to the greensand, an abundant supply of beautiful water is obtained, which flows to the surface, and would flow as high as Sevenoaks under the laws of hydrostatic pressure.

The fountains in Trafalgar Square are supplied from an artesian well sunk 392 feet, but the pressure at that depth is insufficient to force the water to the surface, so that the hydrostatic action has to be supplemented by the aid of steam. Among the deepest of these borings is that at Grenelle, on the outskirts of Paris, where the well reaches the confines of the Gault, 1,798 feet below the surface, and projects water to a height of 32 feet above it, at an uniform temperature of nearly 82° Fahrenheit. Remarkable, however, as is this celebrated well of Grenelle, a new one was completed last September in the Bois de Boulogne, which constitutes a still greater engineering triumph. Hitherto, few artesian wells have been of as large a bore as even six inches—but this well is of the enormous diameter of more than 18 inches, the depth immense, and the flow of water enough for the ample supply of half a million people. The boring and other necessary works have occupied seven years; and we may imagine the joy of the engineer, when, on the 24th September, after his anxious labours, he saw the sparkling fluid gush forth in a continual and vast stream. Four years ago water had been nearly reached, when suddenly the iron tube forming the well proved too weak, and collapsed under the stupendous weight of the earth around. The French have, at all times, been particularly energetic in the matter of Artesian wells: and, whatever the merits or demerits otherwise of their government in Algeria, their engineers have at least the credit of having opened numerous wells in arid saharas, where pure water is the great deficiency under which the people suffer. The nomads must have been astonished in no small degree at the first operation of this sort; for after a few weeks' boring, water gushed out in a perfect river, 60,000 gallons flowing every hour. The application of this discovery to Africa seems likely to metamorphose the face of nature and the inhabitants also; for around such springs the sandy desert soon becomes a fertile plain, and, in several instances, wandering tribes have abandoned their nomad life, and settled as agriculturists amid the fertility induced by plentiful water.

The boring of artesian wells has furnished data for the wholly distinct inquiry—What is the temperature of the earth towards its interior? The wells have their origin below the zone, which is affected by the change of the seasons, and therefore their temperature is constant. From observations made with the utmost caution, it appears that, down to a depth of 1,800 feet the temperature of the earth rises 1° Fahrenheit for every 55 feet nearer to the centre, and below that depth 1° for every 44 feet.

The *quâquâversus* pressure is that property of non-elastic fluids—of

which water is one—which causes pressure felt at any point in a confined space to be transmitted equally in every direction throughout the mass. Let Fig. 3 represent a closed tank having four inches of surface at the bottom; if, now, a weight or pressure of 1 lb. be brought to bear on one square inch of the surface of the water, that pressure will be communicated equally throughout, and consequently every square inch of the bottom will have to bear a pressure of 1 lb., so that the whole bottom will be required to sustain 4 lbs.; and the pressure is not merely imparted to the bottom, for it is transmitted through the water in every direction, each square inch of top and sides having to resist a similar bursting power of 1 lb. This is the *quâquâversus* pressure. Let us now suppose the pressure of 1 lb. to be effected by a vertical column of water 1 inch thick and 2 feet high; if for this column a more slender one of but a $\frac{1}{4}$ inch each way be substituted, the pound of water will occupy a height of 32 feet, and the pressure of 1 lb. will be exerted on every sixteenth-part of a square inch in the bottom of the cistern, making a total pressure—instead of 4 lbs. as before—of 64 lbs. on the four square inches. This will serve to give some idea of the terrible rapidity with which pressure increases as the height of the water column becomes greater, and of the necessity there is for immense strength in water-mains which expose a large surface to a fluid intensified by a pressure from above of perhaps some hundred feet.



Fig. 3.

It is difficult to say positively whether man is most injured or benefited by the *quâquâversus* pressure. It bursts our water-mains, deluging the streets; breaks through walls of canal embankments; empties reservoirs over districts by no means anxious for a second flood; and in rainy seasons even tears up impervious ground overlying porous soil. On the other hand, by its agency in the Bramah or Hydraulic press, we are empowered to raise enormous weights, not excluding the largest ships,—we pushed the Great Eastern into the water, and we are possessed of the most potent slow motive power ever yet rendered available as aid in human operations.

The action of the Hydraulic Press is remarkably simple: (A B C D) is a mass of extremely solid iron, in which are two cylindrical openings (E and F) connected by the channel (E V F), containing a valve (v) to prevent water pumped from (F) to (E) returning. In (E) a solid iron piston fits, which lifts the weight to be raised; and a similar one of much smaller diameter is worked, in (F), by the lever (H I K): (G) is a tank from which water is drawn into the cylinder (F) on the piston being raised. As this piston rises, water ascends from (G), its return being prevented by a valve at (F). On the subsequent descent of the piston, this water forces open the valve (v), and establishes its position under the great piston in (E), which the water, acting by *quâquâversus* pressure, will gradually force to the top. On the principle explained in Fig. 3, the greatest power will be exerted when the difference in size between the two

pistons is greatest. To show the power of this mechanism, let us suppose the diameter of the large piston 12 inches—that of the small one, half an

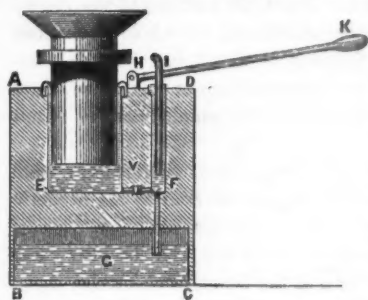


Fig. 4

inch; also, that the whole lever (H I K) is ten times as long as the portion (H I) intervening between the fulcrum and the head of the pump (F). Now, assuming that four men are working at the handle (K), between weight and strength they will easily exert a pressure of 8 cwt. From the action of the lever, the pressure on (I) will then be 4 tons, which will also be exerted on the quarter of a square inch of water under the piston (F), and therefore on each quarter-inch of the base of the great piston (E). The whole pressure on the latter will therefore exceed the pressure at the foot of the piston in (F) 576 times; and consequently a raising power of 2,304 tons—equal to the weight of a large ship—will be imparted (minus a certain allowance for friction) to the great piston by the strength of four men applied to the apparatus at (K). Of course, from the relative sizes of the two cylinders, the motion of the large piston is very slow; and while the proportionate power may be increased to any extent, either by diminishing the cylinder (F) or increasing (E), it follows that in every case increase of power must be accompanied by loss of velocity.

With regard to the third great power of water—its wonderful expansion when heated above the boiling point in confinement—there is little to be said in an article of this length. We see the might of steam on every side: in the impetuous locomotive almost annihilating distance by its speed—in the majestic steam-ship moving proudly through the sea, undeterred by adverse wind or wave—in the busy whirl of countless spindles, saving, yet sustaining, the labour of many myriad hands. But to trace, even cursorily, the way in which steam works these marvels would be beyond my space. I can only, then, glance at the general principle under which water, heated in a state of confinement till it vaporizes, becomes so irresistible an agent.

A pint of water may be evaporated by the combustion of two ounces of coal; and from the heat imparted to it during the process it will have expanded into 216 gallons of steam—in itself most elastic. This amount of steam is sufficient to exert a mechanical force capable of raising 37 tons one foot high; and, if the steam were permitted to expand in virtue of its own elasticity, double that force might be derived from it. In practice, the steam is forced into a strong cylinder, in which an air-tight piston moves. The steam, being first admitted below the piston, forces it up to the top of the cylinder, and being then allowed to enter above—while

escape is given below to the steam previously used—the piston is forced down again ; and, by the repetition of this alternate action, is constantly moved from end to end of the cylinder. The other portions of the engine being connected with the piston by the piston-rod, the whole mechanism is put in motion. Such, with modifications of detail, has been the construction of every steam-engine, whether high-pressure or low, since James Watt first revolutionized the world's industry by the employment of steam as a motive power.

Machines called steam-engines had been used previously, more especially Savary's ; but they were rather engines worked by atmospheric pressure, in which steam played little more than the secondary part of creating a vacuum. The cylinder was open at the top, and the piston was pulled up by weights on the opposite end of the beam, low-pressure steam being admitted to fill the cavity left beneath. When the cylinder was thus filled with steam, a jet of water was permitted to play for a moment into it, and the steam, being suddenly thereby condensed into a few drops of water, a vacuum ensued, when the pressure of the atmosphere on the top of the piston brought it down again with force enough to counteract the opposing weights, and work a pump, or some such apparatus. The power of these engines was limited by the atmospheric pressure, and bore no comparison with that of steam when itself employed as the source of motion.

In this brief sketch I have not thought it necessary to touch upon the numerous ways in which the mere mechanical force of water is employed in manufactories and other works. Water-wheels of many ingenious descriptions economise the power given by the motion of streams and torrents ; but the power of water in them is evident enough, and I have only wished to expose some of the hidden channels in which its vast force flows for man's use. Professor Ansted has shown the marvellous power of water in nature. I have endeavoured to describe the principal among the wonderful properties which render it of inestimable value to civilized society. We know, that without water the whole system of the earth would immediately collapse ; but it is too universally seen for our surprise to be spontaneously aroused at the extraordinary power which it yields in the service of science and society. Cleanliness and health our towns owe to it ; and, in producing continuous motion of any sort, it is the greatest origin of strength with which we are acquainted.

THE TRACY FAMILY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A SKELETON IN EVERY HOUSE."

IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.

PRELUDE.

ON the afternoon of March 12, 1803, died suddenly—so suddenly that an inquest was held on the body—Lambert Tracy, Esquire, of Bristol, an eminent West India merchant—in those palmy days of flourishing sugar-islands, the lion's share of the trade with which was then in the hands of the commercial magnates of the English western metropolis. The jury reported that Lambert Tracy "died by the visitation of God."

No other verdict could have been returned had *all* the circumstances attendant upon the catastrophe been disclosed at the inquest. Lambert Tracy had, in fact, as the *post mortem* examination proved, died of apoplexy—a rush of blood to the brain, the fatal consequence of which the highest medical aid, immediately summoned, was powerless to avert.

"The sudden reverse of fortune which had befallen the deceased," said the coroner, addressing Mr. Beadon, attorney-at-law and Lambert Tracy's intimate friend, "helped, I have no doubt, to bring about the sad event?"

Mr. Beadon concurred. A docquet in bankruptcy had been struck against Mr. Tracy, and but a few hours previous to his death a messenger from the Court arrived to take possession. "My late highly-respected client and friend," added the lawyer, "was an extremely sensitive, excitable, proud man—proud in a legitimate, honourable sense." The verdict was then formally drawn up, signed, and the jurors departed, quite satisfied that the *coup de sang* which had precipitated Lambert Tracy, Esquire, into the tomb at the comparatively early age of forty-seven, had been dealt by the docquet in bankruptcy.

They were, in part, mistaken. The blow which struck him down was inflicted by Arthur Tracy, his only son, who arrived home from Jamaica a short time before his father (whom he had not seen for many months) expired.

To explain this it will be necessary to transcribe some passages in the early life of Mr. Lambert Tracy. He was a native of Bath, where his father, who had twice failed in business and was much straitened in circumstances, nevertheless contrived to give him a good, common education. Quick of apprehension, of unflagging industry, and remarkably prepossessing in appearance and manner, young Tracy was a great favourite with all who knew him. He had not long completed his fifteenth year when his father, long a widower, died, leaving Lambert so utterly unprovided for that but for the active sympathies of friends the young man would have wanted bread. A situation was obtained for him in the counting-house of Mr. Sherwood, a wealthy merchant of Bristol; and with such skilful assiduity did the handsome clerk avail himself of the opening afforded, so completely did he succeed in ingratiating himself

with Mr. Sherwood and his daughter and heiress, Priscilla Sherwood, that on his twenty-first birthday he married that neither fair nor youthful lady, but whose dowry was a third share in the business, thenceforth to be that of "Sherwood and Company." Mrs. Lambert Tracy is said to have been a woman of violent temper, who thoroughly governed both her father and husband. Certainly, the marriage was not one of affection on the part of lucre-loving, ambitious Lambert Tracy; but there appears to be no reason for believing, or suspecting, that his share in her cruel death—the manner of which I shall presently relate—had its source in any baser prompting than that of pitiable cowardice.

Lambert Tracy was really what Falstaff humorously assumed to be—a coward upon instinct; by which I mean, that if exposed to great and sudden peril, he was animally, instinctively, a wretched craven, possessed by the very insanity of fear to such a degree as scarcely to be morally responsible for his actions. On the other hand—according to the testimony of Mr. Beadon, who must have known the truth—if he had *notice* of a great danger to be confronted, time to summon and prepare his faculties, he could look that danger, how great soever, in the face as calmly and determinedly as the bravest. The circumstances of his wife's death will, however, better illustrate one phase of this dual nature of the man than any comment of mine.

Sixteen years of wedded life had passed away. Their son, baptized Arthur after the wife's father, was at Eton. Mr. Sherwood, long since dead, had bequeathed his realized wealth absolutely to his daughter, which wealth she, who loved her husband with the passionate, wayward wilfulness of her peculiar temperament, invested in the business, thereby enabling him to vastly enlarge the scale of his commercial operations. She took care, however, to reserve the right to recall one-half the capital she advanced at a very short notice.

Such were the financial relations to each other of Tracy and wife in 1796, during the early autumn of which year they indulged themselves in a carriage excursion along the south-western coast, in the course of which they arrived at the village of Blue-Anchor, Bridgewater Bay. The day was oppressively hot; but a light breeze rippled the calmly-breathing bay, and Lambert Tracy proposed to hire a boat, and have two or three hours' sail upon the sparkling summer sea. His lady acquiesced, and they put off in a light skiff, managed by one youthful, inexperienced waterman. About two miles off the shore they were surprised by a summer-storm. Thunder rolled, lightning flashed, and the fierce hissing squall lashed the waters into wild but quickly-passing fury. The skiff, unskilfully handled, capsized, and Lambert Tracy, his wife, and the waterman, were flung, screaming, into the sea.

Mrs. Tracy accidentally clutched a short, light fragment of a spar, that floated out from under the upturned boat. She held to it with the strong grasp of fear; and it sufficed, barely sufficed, to sustain her, half drowning,

from being engulfed. It did, however, suffice; and she would no doubt have been able to hold on till succour, already close at hand, arrived. The accident had been observed by a brig at no great distance off, and a well-manned boat was speeding to the rescue.

Now comes the horrible part of the affair. Lambert Tracy, a very indifferent swimmer, half blinded by the spray, demented by mortal terror, feeling that he could not many moments resist the down-draught of his saturated clothes, found himself whirled by the waves into contact with his wife. He caught at her dress; his hand struck the slight spar to which she clung for life; he, too, seized hold of it. It could not support them both; and Tracy, mad with fear, struggled for its exclusive possession with the ferocity of a wild beast. He struck her fiercely in the face, tore at her hair, bit her hands, finally succeeded in wrenching away her grasp,—and the unfortunate lady went down at once with a scream heard above the crashing thunder and the roaring sea. The frightful scene was witnessed by the waterman, who had clambered upon the upturned boat, and who shouted to Tracy that he might save himself in the same way. So at least he afterwards declared. If he did, Tracy did not hear—at all events did not heed him. The two men were picked up, and conveyed safely on board the brig. Mrs. Tracy did not reappear. The hungry sea held fast its prey till about a week had passed, when the body, during a second summer-squall, was cast upon the shore.

When that happened, Lambert Tracy was lying upon what was supposed would be his death-bed, at the mansion in Bristol. The fiery arrows of remorse and shame had kindled the flame of fever in his brain, and for many days his life hung upon a thread. He recovered his bodily, but never his placid, mental health. During his illness, Fryer, the Blue-Anchor boatman, called several times to make inquiries; and he was the first person with whom Lambert Tracy, when sufficiently restored to health, transacted business. A strictly business transaction was that settled between the merchant and the waterman. Fryer's object was to sell his silence at the highest figure he could get; he received a large sum down, and, not being one of those very rare rascals who illustrate the apocryphal axiom that there is honour amongst thieves, in after days, it will be found, made a second sale of the terrible sight he had witnessed.

Meanwhile, Lambert Tracy applied himself more sedulously than ever to business. Only amidst its whirring buz, its clanging vicissitude of speculative ventures, constantly increasing in audacity, could he find partial respite from the upbraidings of his conscience—deafen himself to that wild scream which the commonest incidents would suddenly evoke from the chords of memory:—

“ The billows told him of it : the winds
Did sing it to him ; and the thunder,
That deep and dreadful organ-pipe,
Pronounced *her* name ! ”

Mr. Tracy nevertheless bore himself bravely before the world; and as for several years his success as a commercial gamester was in the main prodigious, he was held to be one of the most fortunate and enviable of men. To Mr. Beadon, his intimate and faithful friend, he alone disclosed the sad secret which poisoned his life, and turned his golden gains to dust and bitter ashes. The hard-headed lawyer did not see the lamentable occurrence in so terrible a light as did Tracy. "There was no malice prepense," he argued, "in a deed solely prompted by an uncontrollable instinct of self-preservation." There was some truth in this view of the subject, but the lawyer's reasoning shed no balm over Lambert Tracy's wounded spirit.

I must now introduce Lambert Tracy's son upon the scene. In person, Arthur Tracy resembled his handsome father; in mind and disposition, he was a masculine exaggerated reflex of his mother—more fiercely wilful, and a yet more eager worshipper of wealth, than she. For that to him ever-indulgent mother he had felt as strong an attachment as he *could* feel for any human being—except himself; and her sudden, tragical death very painfully affected him. For his father, Arthur Tracy felt rather admiration and respect as a wealthy, pushing merchant, than the reverential regard of a son.

Four years passed away. Arthur Tracy having completed his education, and passed his majority, went to reside with his father till a decision was arrived at as to his career in the world. Some startling sentences incautiously uttered by Mr. Tracy and his friend Beadon, and overheard by Arthur, strengthening a vague, dreamy suspicion which other *indices* had awakened in the son's mind—the shuddering horror, for example, which blanched Mr. Tracy's face and shook his frame whenever the slightest allusion was made to his wife's death—a wife whom, though to her he owed everything, Arthur Tracy well knew he had never really loved—determined the young man to make secret but strict inquiry at Blue Anchor into all the circumstances. He did so: met with Fryer the waterman, who, in consideration of a large bribe, disclosed all the details—coarsely coloured, one may fairly presume—of the catastrophe.

Arthur Tracy was greatly shocked; and in the first transport of indignation purposed to openly upbraid his mother's murderer, as he deemed him to be, with his tiger cruelty and cowardice. A very little reflection showed him the folly of such a proceeding. No legal crime had been committed. His father was rich—immensely so, the world said. By some blunder of the lawyers, Mrs. Tracy's wealth, she having died intestate, had passed absolutely to her husband, who had the power to disinherit his son; which son must, therefore, of necessity, seal up the tragic story in his own breast!

Early in 1802, Arthur Tracy was despatched by his father to Jamaica. The wildly-speculative merchant had loosely permitted a large planter there to draw heavily upon him, in anticipation of growing crops of coffee

and canes. Those crops had partially failed : Mr. Lambert Tracy was, in consequence, a long way out ; and it was necessary to send a clever, confidential agent to the island, in order to the winding up of the business. Arthur readily accepted the mission, and, narrowly escaping being snapped up by a French privateer, reached Jamaica in safety.

The affair was more complicated, and required a much longer time to bring to a final issue, than had been anticipated ; so that it was the first week in February, 1803, when Arthur Tracy re-embarked for England in the Mail Packet bound for London, where he arrived on the 10th of March, two days only before his father was officially adjudged bankrupt.

Amongst his fellow-passengers was a Mrs. Warner, a fascinating widow of about his own age, and mother of an infant daughter, named Emmeline. The lady was a native of Norfolk, and her departure from Jamaica had been hastened by a letter from the London solicitors of her maternal grandfather, Francis Ryder, Esquire, recently deceased, whom she had offended by her marriage with Captain Warner ; but who, repenting of his obduracy, had bequeathed her, by a will executed several months before his death, an estate, the net value of which was above three thousand pounds per annum, with remainder to the little Emmeline.

Arthur Tracy had made the lady's acquaintance during her husband's life-time, and that acquaintance was so well improved during the voyage home, that when he parted from her in London, it had been settled that their marriage should take place as soon as the necessary settlements could be arranged between Tracy, senior, and the charming widow's legal representatives.

The young and charming widow's grace and beauty had really touched Arthur Tracy's heart, though not, I imagine, very deeply ; and now his Life-bark, so richly freighted with Youth, Love, Riches, was doomed to be engulfed, whilst entering the very port of its destination, in the quicksands of bankruptcy !

It is easier to imagine than describe the, for a time, wordless dismay of the young man, when such terrible tidings of ruin flashed like a thunderbolt from the lips of the attorney, Beadon, in presence of the shaking, speechless bankrupt. Recovering himself, stung to fury by the completeness of the destruction that had fallen upon him, Arthur burst into a torrent of merciless invective, denounced Lambert Tracy as the cowardly murderer of his wife—as the base, heartless squanderer of the wealth which she had destined for her son. The prematurely aged father had not many weeks before been seized with a slight apoplectic fit, upon opening some letters announcing frightful losses from the fall of sugars (in consequence of the peace, or truce, of Amiens,) of which he held an immense stock. And now, trembling in every limb—fascinated by terror, he staggered, reeled, beneath the maledictions of his son, as if they had been dagger-strokes ; and when at last that son, exhausted by his own mad fury, hurled his last curse, and flung out of the room, Lambert Tracy, with a

faint, bubbling cry, and catching wildly at the air, fell heavily upon the floor in an apoplectic fit,—not a slight one this time. The result has been told. In less than half an hour the eminent Bristol merchant had ceased to breathe.

Mr. Beadon did not think it expedient to speak of Arthur Tracy's agency in accelerating, to use the mildest term, his father's death. It could have answered no useful purpose to do so; and the son was consequently not called before the inquest.

He must have felt, one must suppose, some compunctious visitings of conscience. It was not from *his* lips that such terrible anathemas should have flown.

Arthur Tracy did not, at all events, display any sign of remorse or self-upbraiding. He shut himself up in gloomy discontent in his chamber, under plea of illness, to muse over his fallen fortunes, and if possible devise some mode of, partially at least, retrieving his position. By written communications from the attorney he was made clearly aware that nothing—absolutely nothing—could be saved out of the gigantic wreck; that the estate was not expected to pay more than five shillings in the pound, if so much; and that it was ascertained Lambert Tracy had been hopelessly insolvent more than two years previous to the final downcome. As long ago as that he had written to his deceased wife's uncle, a Mr. James Sherwood, established at Madras, earnestly imploring assistance, which letter, contemptuously returned, as it appeared, without comment, had been found amongst the bankrupt's papers. Mr. Beadon further intimated that it was imperative on Mr. Arthur Tracy to give up the considerable sum which it was known he had brought with him from Jamaica: the creditors were highly incensed, and not the slightest lenity could be hoped for.

The considerable sum spoken of was over two thousand pounds, and Arthur Tracy fully resolved not to part with that without a struggle. Yet how to retain it, except by secretly and at once flying the country, he knew not. Whilst meditating that desperate step a brilliant ray of light from an unhopèd-for quarter broke upon the dark future.

He received a letter dated from the Hummums Hotel, London, from the fair widow, couched in somewhat petulant, yet essentially kind, even caressing language, expressive of her surprise that she had not heard from him since he left London. The lady feared he was ill, and was anxious to receive a letter from him by the earliest post.

The charming woman was not then cognizant of the Tracy bankruptcy—had not seen his father's name in the *Gazette*—knew not of his death. Might it not be possible to obtain her consent—a score of pretexts could be easily invented—to the immediate celebration of their marriage? The widow and he had again and again vowed to each other, with the venial perjury permissible in such cases—that the vulgar accidents of fortune—the lover happening to be heir to a millionaire, the lady entitled to a large landed estate—had not in the slightest degree influenced

either in determining upon a union, to which they were solely impelled by Love's own sweet constraint.

Arthur Tracy determined to venture the audacious *coup*. Once the magical ceremony gone through, the lady would have no choice but to quietly accept her destiny, and would soon condone the *ruse d'amour* practised against her when she found, as she should find, what a kind, tender, adoring husband she was mated with.

Tracy started per mail the same day for London, having first left a note for Mr. Beadon, briefly to the effect that the writer would not fail to present himself before the Bankruptcy Commissioners upon the day advertised for the preliminary meeting.

The wily lover need not have been at such pains to weave the plausible fiction by which he purposed to inveigle Mrs. Warner into a rash, hasty marriage—to rehearse so often the impassioned solicitations by which he hoped to overcome the natural scruples she would feel to yield to his importunity. The charming widow was in the same disastrous predicament as himself. At the first interview with the solicitors, whose letter reached her at Jamaica, she was stunned by the announcement that a will of subsequent date to that under which she would have taken the landed estate had been discovered, by which instrument the capricious testator had devised the whole of his property to a grandniece, from whom it appeared he had been temporarily estranged at the time he executed the will in favour of Mrs. Warner.

The blow was a terrible one. The lady was almost literally destitute of pecuniary resources of any kind, except the pittance to which she was entitled as a captain's widow. The only hope that after a time fluttered doubtfully at her heart, was kindled by the ardent devotion with which she had inspired her rich lover, Arthur Tracy. Should she acquaint him with the cruel disappointment she had met with? At first she determined to do so. How, indeed, could she avoid the disclosure, perilous, fatal as it might prove to be?

The arrival of Arthur Tracy in hasty response to her brief note, his vehement entreaties that, for the reasons he poured forth with passionate volubility, she would not delay his happiness, caused her to forego that wise resolution; and as soon as a licence could be procured, Lydia Warner, widow, and Arthur Tracy, bachelor, were joined together at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, in the bond of wedlock. Immediately after the ceremony the happy pair left London, *en route* for Guernsey, where they purposed to spend the honeymoon—a locality selected by Tracy for the excellent reason that the power of the Commissioners in Bankruptcy was not, and is not, recognized in the Channel Islands.

WRECKED.

It would task a brilliant imagination to conceive a more rapturous state of felicity than had apparently fallen to the lot of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Tracy

when they took possession of the best apartments of the Royal Hotel, St. Peter's Port, Guernsey. All impulses of soul and sense that help to beautify and bless the dazzling dawn of wedded life were theirs in rich abundance,—fervid, youthful passion—Beauty kissed by Love to ecstasy,—and—to descend a little—that very important item, plenty, for the time, of ready money! One easily understands, too, that under the peculiar circumstances there would be sublimation of spoken and smiling endearments; exuberance of protestation that riches were in the estimation of both mere dross,—the all-sufficing elixir of life being love—still, love! Blest as the immortal gods are they, would no doubt have been said, sung, sighed, growled, or groaned by any envious observer of the “happy pair,” who had no knowledge or suspicion of the mutual, acted lies—festering, weltering, into graver proportions with every passing hour,—which converted the honey of the honey-month into poisonous gall. The skeleton at Egyptian feasts, the sword of Damocles, are obvious though not quite apposite illustrations of such a delightful state of things, seeing that the skeleton was merely a dismal reminder of, it might be reasonably hoped, a long-distant unpleasantness, and that the hair-suspended sword, if it fell and slew, would not *shame*, Mister D. Nevertheless, I am strongly of opinion, that had the choice been offered them, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Tracy would have unanimously elected to be exposed to the moral shame rather than the steel sword.

The inevitable discovery was delayed by one of the fierce, long-continued gales which in those steamless days often, during winter, suspended postal communication between England and the Channel Islands for weeks together. The mail-packet, more than a fortnight overdue, would, it was quite certain, bring two very decisive letters—one for the lady, one for the gentleman. The lady before leaving London had posted a note to her solicitors, Messrs. Fonblanque of Lincoln's Inn Fields, acquainting them with her, for divers imperative reasons, hasty marriage with Mr. Arthur Tracy, only son and heir of the great Bristol merchant of that name; and modestly suggesting that a letter addressed to “Mrs. Arthur Tracy, Post-office, Guernsey,” informing that lady, as painful, quite unexpected *news*, that a will disinheriting her in favour of Mr. Francis Ryder's niece had suddenly turned up, would ensure her eternal gratitude.

Mr. Arthur Tracy, on his part—feeling upon reflection uncomfortable misgivings anent the possible consequences, to himself personally, of running off with a large sum of money belonging to the estate of an adjudicated bankrupt—had written, just before embarkation for Guernsey, to Mr. Beadon, apprising that gentleman that he was fortunately espoused to a lady of large landed property, that he would lose no time in making up the Jamaica accounts, and paying over to the assignees whatever sums he might find due to them. A much less acute person than Mr. Arthur Tracy could not indeed have failed to perceive, that for the husband of a wealthy wife to incur the hazard of seeing his name in the Hue and Cry

would be in the highest degree absurd, suicidal. In his case, too, it was explained how very desirable it was that the Tracy bankruptcy should be mentioned as a sudden and utterly unforeseen catastrophe.

Thus the little games of the wedded pair were identical with each other; and when as they were about sitting down to breakfast one dull, drizzly morning, the signal that the mail-packet from England was at last in sight flew out from the mimic mast-yard of Castle Cornet, both culprits must have felt with a nervous shudder that the decisive hour, the stroke of which would echo through their lives, was about to sound. The lady, we may be sure, sought courage in the hope that dear Arthur, who, as he had so often sighed and sworn, loved his beautiful Lydia for herself alone, could not, would not, he himself being so rich, be angry with his youthful bride because a cruel grandpapa had at the last moment—(Messrs. Fonblanque had not of course been so heartless as to refuse the little favour she had asked of them?)—cancelled or superseded the will made in her favour! Impossible to suppose such a thing! It was much likelier that Arthur would love her still more dearly, if that were possible, in consequence of the harsh injustice to which she had been subjected.

And "dear Arthur," one can as readily assume, was at the same moment laying the like flattering unction to his soul, that his sweet, angelic Lydia—Mr. Beadon having, he was quite sure, done *his* part to make things pleasant—that his angelic, loving Lydia would feel only tenderest sympathy for a husband suffering under so unexpected and stern a stroke of fate. Nay, she would, he believed, exult in the sweet consciousness that her own ample inheritance would shield the chosen partner of her life from the worst consequences of so sad a reverse of fortune. I doubt, however, that those moral tonics gave the happy pair a hearty appetite for breakfast on that dull, drizzly morning. A paralyzed stomach is, as most of us know by experience, the accompaniment of an agitated brain.

"Only two letters, Sir, for you and your lady, at the Post-office," says the waiter, as he lays them on the breakfast table.

"This, love, bearing the London post-mark, is from your solicitor; this, marked Bristol, is as certainly from mine. There is no mistaking the devil's children's caligraphy."

It could not perhaps have been easy to decide whose hand shook the most, or which face was palest, when husband and wife opened the letters; but the manifestation of dismay which broke from them the moment they had mastered the purport of the lawyers' missives, differed widely in mode of expression. A hot flush reddened the features of Arthur Tracy as his eyes flushed over and recoiled from the waving, blinding lines; his hand crumpled up the paper as if he grasped the throat of a living foe, and a ferocious curse churned through his ashen, quivering lips. As to the lady, the faint colour of her face faded utterly, her nerveless grasp let fall the letter, and she fell back with a sighing scream on the sofa, in a fainting state.

"Sir," wrote Mr. Beadon, "the Assignees of the estate of Lambert Tracy, deceased, desire me to state, that if the moneys received by you, as agent to your late father, are not immediately forthcoming, proceedings involving very unpleasant consequences to yourself personally will be instituted without delay. I have received," added the attorney, "a communication from Messrs. Fonblanque of Lincoln's Inn, by which I learn that you have married a woman without a penny. In reply, I stated you were in precisely the same predicament." Mr. Beadon concluded by declining any further correspondence with Mr. Arthur Tracy.

Messrs. Fonblanque's note to the lady curtly informed her that Mr. Arthur Tracy, the person she had married, was a pauper, who, if he did not hasten to restore a considerable sum of money he had surreptitiously carried off, would find himself in the clutches of the criminal law. The solicitors added, "that they could hardly understand Mrs. Arthur Tracy's request that they should pretend she was not aware, previous to her marriage, that the will of Francis Ryder, Esq., deceased, in her favour, had been practically cancelled. Messrs. F. would certainly not lend themselves to any such misrepresentation," &c. &c.

Let us turn away our eyes from the scene which quickly followed discovery of the infamous deception practised towards each other by the bridegroom and bride—close our ears to the venomous taunts, the bitter bandying to and fro of the spoken, acted lies, interchanged during the *lune de miel*. It is over at last. The festering stings of shame—the rankling rage engendered by finding themselves mutually victimized—the biters, himself and herself, bitten, are unappeased, unappeasable; but the storm of wordy war is past. The lady has retired to her chamber, bolted herself in, and, with natural revulsion of feeling, is sobbing piteously. The gentleman sullen, saturnine, is meditating how he may best effectually once for all get rid of his wife, and whilst carefully avoiding Newgate, keep in hand fast the two thousand pounds odd—not very much diminished by wedding costs—which he hugs himself to think are in his actual possession. The truce of Amiens, no one doubts, will soon be at an end, and half the nations of Europe, with England in the thickest of the *mêlée*, flying at each other's throats again. Such a state of general hurly-burly cannot, he thinks, but afford a man with a cool brain, bold heart, stout arm, and a sufficiently elastic conscience, abundance of profitable occupation. The *modus operandi* would require careful consideration; but in the meantime there was no question of the imperative necessity of holding on to the money and casting off the wife. Distressing, excruciating even, as it must of course be, to tear one's self away in almost the rosiest flush, when only the very brightest hues—which always go first—of marital felicity have been brushed away; distressing, excruciating, as it must be to tear one's self away under such circumstances from a beauteous, fascinating bride—the artful jade is all that—still, there is no help for it! The letters of the lawyers

warn me that if I would give those keen-scented cormorant assignees the go-by, I must show them a very swift pair of heels; and how, if weighted with a wife, could that be done, I should like to know? And Lydia will console herself! For the present she will, no doubt, find a refuge and home with some relative. Naturally, she will, after no very long interval of time, find dependent indigence, and the anomalous condition of wife and widow, insupportable; and knowing that I have bidden England a final farewell, will comprehend that her wisest course is to treat that silly ceremony performed at St. Paul's Church, Covent Garden, and its corollary, our little trip to this island, as absurd unrealities, suggestive only of the necessity of having a wary eye to a sealed settlement before she again gives herself away for better, for worse. Nobody but those rascally attorneys are cognisant of the secret. Besides, the lady will be able to give out, before long, that dear Arthur, who embarked for the Indies, East or West, China or Japan—no matter where—died on his voyage out, leaving her, *et cetera*. She could, I can answer for it, manage that little bit of fiction, as I devoutly trust it would be, very cleverly. Thus our little comedy—a delicious *pièce d'occasion* till the curtain rose upon the last scene—will, after all, turn out to be but a new edition, with variations (to be continued after any number of years are supposed to have elapsed), of "All's Well that Ends Well."

Having arrived at that jocular and comfortable conclusion, Arthur Tracy went out for a stroll; but quickly tiring of perambulating the "cursed streets of stairs," for which Guernsey is quite as distinguished as Malta, returned to the Royal Hotel a few minutes after the mail-packet from Jersey to Weymouth was signalled to be in sight.

Nothing could be luckier! He would take passage in her, notwithstanding the sailors idling about on the pier predicted that it would be blowing great guns again in a few hours, and that his own opinion fully coincided with theirs. [Tracy's West India voyage out and home, and one or two trips to Cuba and Saint Domingo, had not only given him a capital pair of sea-legs, but made him half a sailor—the best half, regard being had to intelligence. It was no doubt a latent consciousness of his fitness for a Rover's life, which suggested the notion that he might play a successful part in the sea-strife about, men said, to be re-inaugurated upon a grand scale.]

Yes, it would be soon blowing great guns, with a vengeance too, Arthur Tracy had no doubt; but that was a peril he would cheerfully confront rather than incur the possibility of being nabbed, per next mail, by officers from England, who, he had discovered during his sojourn in the island, could, if armed by an almost matter-of-course order from the Privy Council Office, carry out that objectionable process. Then his wife, who was still closely shut up and spitefully sobbing, he could take leave of by letter, politely explaining that for both their sakes the separation must be immediate and eternal—that he should at once go abroad—

whither, not decided upon. That letter, enclosing a £50 bank-note, he would slip under dear Lydia's chamber door, as soon as the packet brought up in the Roads; by that means avoiding an irritating and useless personal interview.

It was growing late in the day when Tracy stepped into the first boat putting off for the packet. Already a fierce gale was blowing, and there was such a tremendous sea on, in that dangerous Road, that the boat twice narrowly missed being swamped, short as was the distance to be traversed.

Tracy had not been many minutes upon the *Ariadne's* deck, when glancing pierward he saw his wife coming off to the vessel. Greatly exasperated, and resolved not to be seen or be spoken to by the unhappy lady, he instantly went below, and turned into his berth in the cabin appropriated to gentlemen—where, of course, she could not follow him. Arrived at Weymouth during the night, as was expected, he would easily give her the slip, the more easily that he knew she would, in such weather, be utterly prostrated by sea-sickness. Not, lovely Lydia, to be so easily caught—a second time—as you imagine! No, no!

Had Arthur Tracy remained on deck he would have known that his wife did not succeed in reaching the packet. The boat in which she came off was a very heavy one, pulled by two oars only; and such slow way did she make that Captain Goodridge, anxious to thread the far-reaching, rocky labyrinth before him by daylight, lost patience, and ordered the moorings to be slipped. The boat was consequently obliged to re-land its passenger. Tracy, remaining ignorant of that fact, fully believed his wife had come on board, and been conducted to the ladies' cabin—a misapprehension which in his after life led to singular results. This was not the only mistake he made on that, to him, fateful day. His wife had no intention, no wish, to thrust her society, her presence, upon him. Her purpose in putting off to the vessel was to insist upon the restoration of her jewel-case, which, though not containing gems of high value, held family mementos she greatly prized. Mr. Tracy, she quickly discovered, had, intentionally or unintentionally, packed it away in his portmanteau—another circumstance, the unguessed-of consequences of which were written in the unrolled scroll of Time.

Re-landed on the pier, Mrs. Arthur Tracy watched the fast-receding vessel with “a boding, aching heart,” her own expression—(she was a loving Woman, and a mourning Bride you know,) till it disappeared in the thick storm and darkness; then returned sorrowfully to the hotel, mentally associating, we may be sure, the gloomy future of her life, as it lay before her, with the night and danger into which the *Ariadne* had vanished.

About a fortnight subsequently, the following paragraph went the round of the English papers:—

“THE MAIL-PACKET *ARIADNE*.—The *Ariadne*, Captain Goodridge, from Jersey and Guernsey, was driven upon the Casket Rocks during the

tremendous hurricane which swept the Channel during the night of the 7th instant, and almost instantly went to pieces. Only one, out of about twenty male and female passengers, was saved—a Mr. Smith—and two of the crew. Information has reached Bristol that Mr. Arthur Tracy, son of Mr. Lambert Tracy, formerly an eminent merchant of that city, and one who had acquired the esteem of all who knew him, embarked at Guernsey in the ill-fated *Ariadne*, and has consequently perished."

Pausing a moment to remark, that "The Caskets" is a group of rocks about midway, I think, between Alderney and the Isle of Wight, and whereon, I am sure, the *Victory*, a one hundred-gun ship—predecessor in the Navy List of *the Victory*—was lost, with all her hands, during a tempestuous night in 1786, I proceed to correct an important item in the newspaper statement just quoted.

Some two or three hours after the *Ariadne* slipped her Guernsey Road moorings, Arthur Tracy, feeling quite sure that the ladies on board—Mrs. Arthur Tracy in particular—would, in the terrific tempest that had arisen, keep strictly below, turned out and went on deck. The hurricane was at its height; the sea swept the vessel fore and aft in tremendous volume, and it was plain to Arthur Tracy that the old crank, crazy tub, badly handled moreover, was quite as likely, if not much more likely, to turn turtle or go down stern or stem foremost, as to fetch Portland. Now, miserable poltroon in a moral sense as he was, young Tracy, in presence of mere bodily danger, was no more susceptible of fear than Nelson. In such a situation he was a man to play his last card as coolly as if he still held a heap of trumps, safe to win, whatever might befall the game of Life *versus* Death.

Thus it occurred to him, that under the actual circumstances it would be prudent—not throwing a chance away—to securely fasten his bulky pocket-book, containing all his property in heavy bank-notes, about his person; and (well remembered!) to similarly secure the jewel-case. (Perhaps he, at the time, intended to leave it at Weymouth for dear Lydia—who knows?) Well, the bank-notes and jewel-case being skilfully assured upon his own life, Mr. Arthur Tracy went on deck again, and spite of wind and sea, managed, by holding on to the cutter's chains, to remain there. Tracy was a mighty swimmer. It has even been said, and written, that when at Jamaica in his youth, he fought his famous battle with a shark. That, however, is a mistake. The shark business took place, it will be seen, many years after he sailed from the West Indies with the fascinating, fatal, Widow Warner. Still he was, no doubt, at the time I am now writing of, a powerful swimmer; and it is likely enough that, in his estimate of imminent contingencies, he relied in some degree upon that faculty to save himself, should the *Ariadne* come to grief by being driven upon Alderney, the Wight, or whatever island or mainland the sea and storm might, in their capricious fury, hurl her against. To give his strong swimming the ghost of a chance of coming into successful

play, it was imperative he should remain on deck—and, as I have said, he did so.

About ten o'clock on the morrow of the day upon which he embarked at Guernsey in the *Ariadne*, Arthur Tracy, though sorely bruised, was fully restored to consciousness and memory—thanks to the care of, and the restoratives administered by, the solitary guardians of the Casket Lights. He could recall the terrible incidents of the wreck—the frightful crash of the bows of the cutter as it struck upon the rocks—the snapping of the mast by the board—the rending asunder at the next shock of the vessel's frame, as a walnut-shell is crushed—the quickly stifled screams of despair—his own desperate fight with the sea,—all that was clear enough, but subsequent circumstances were confused in his remembrance. They were related by the Light-keepers, who, however, could only say that they found him and two seamen alive—barely alive—upon an elevated point of the Caskets, at early dawn; and that several dead bodies, and fragments of a vessel, had been flung upon the rocks.

"No one saved but two sailors and myself, you say?"

"Only you and two of the crew."

"No woman?"

"Certainly not."

It was certain, then, that his wife was drowned; and, having before ascertained that the oil-cased pocket-book and the jewel-case were safe, he joyously pronounced himself and the two seamen to be devilish lucky fellows. (Perhaps he wept, as physical wounds sometimes bleed, inwardly, for the lost Lydia!)

Another lightning thought flashed upon that excited brain. It was known—would be published in the papers—that Mr. Arthur Tracy was a passenger on board the *Ariadne*. Intelligence of the unfortunate young gentleman's death, on his way no doubt to square accounts with the assignees of a certain estate, would put an end to all impertinent inquiries after the said Arthur Tracy. That would be a fine lead-off in the game he was about to play.

"If," said he, addressing one of the Light-keepers—"if a box with the name of John Smith painted upon it should be flung ashore or arock, that box is my property. I wish," he added, disconsolately surveying his torn, stained, utterly ruined dress, "I wish I had not had my Sunday suit on."

"John Smith," repeated the man, writing the name in a memorandum book, "John Smith; all right."

Thus was born, metaphorically, into the world, "Skipper Smith;" a remarkable man, and bold mariner, who may be said to have illustrated upon a reduced—an immensely reduced scale, certainly—Dundonald's Admiralty-rejected plan for arresting the Continental conquests of the French armies, by giving them enough, and more than enough, to do at home.

A LETTER OF MARQUE.

THE storm had completely passed away; the clear, wintry brightness of the morning enabled the coast-guard stationed at Alderney to distinctly make out the signals displayed at the Caskets, and a boat carrying a surgeon at once put off for the rocks.

Neither Smith, *alias* Tracy, nor the two sailors—north-countrymen—proved to be dangerously hurt; and late the same evening they were safely landed and housed at Alderney, and as soon as they had recovered from the effects of the cuts, sprains, and bruises they had sustained, were embarked in a fishing-smack direct for Portsmouth, where they safely arrived after a swift, pleasant run.

To have landed at the great war-port a few months later, clad as he was in the dress, purchased in Alderney, of a common sailor, would to a dead certainty have put an extinguisher at once and for ever upon Arthur Tracy's cherished project. A renewal of the war with France not, however, having been finally decided upon, he passed through Portsmouth, at which place he parted company with the two seamen, ungrabbed by the British lion's naval providers—the lynx-eyed, ruthless press-gang. Imagining for a moment it could have, and had, happened to Arthur Tracy to be seized and sent on board one of his gracious Majesty's receiving ships, he would, one may be sure, have deemed himself the most infernally ill-used, most unfortunate young fellow in existence, and have awfully cursed men and things in general—the land, and its atrocious institutions, of his birth in particular. Now, I believe, on the contrary, that such an apparent misadventure would have been the very best thing that could possibly have befallen him. Say that he would not, perhaps, have had the supreme luck to vanish from the earth and a grateful country in a blaze of glory—though there was a very fair chance of obtaining that dazzling distinction in the good Trafalgar times coming, and not far off; still he might, with his qualities, have lived to be an Admiral, or Post-Captain, or Lieutenant, or Master, or Boatswain—at all events a Greenwich Pensioner, which, even throwing in two wooden legs, would, it seems to me, have been preferable to——But anon, anon!

War, however, not having actually broken out, Arthur Tracy missed that chance, and left Portsmouth, in pursuance of his destiny, a few hours after he entered it—on foot. The young man was brimful of hope and confidence; but for all that, determined to walk warily on a path where one false step might be destruction. The longer he had reflected, during the few quiet days he passed in Alderney, upon the opportuneness and other circumstances attending the wreck of the *Ariadne*, the more heartily he congratulated himself upon the results—his poor wife's death excepted—of course. (It was a pity, by the way, since the melancholy catastrophe *was* to occur, that that fifty-pound note had been lost with her.)

Tracy's immediate destination was the North—the maritime North, of England. The conversations he had held with the two north-country

seamen had suggested that course. They had served in the collier-fleets, and Tracy himself knew well enough that your genuine English sea-dog, whose pulse a furious hurricane or a desperate battle would scarcely hurry one beat in an hour, was to be found in fullest perfection in the hardy, danger-cradled mariners accustomed to feel their way along the iron-bound eastern shores of England in long dark winter nights, when each rope they handled was a bar of ice, the frozen sails-sheets of iron, and who felt an ever-present careless consciousness that a gale from the westward might any day or night send them to Kingdom Come in just no time—hugging, as they necessarily did, a coast which the richest and most benignant Government in the world has to this day left unprovided with a single Harbour of Refuge. Those were the fellows for Tracy's money, and with whom he purposed to form an intimate acquaintance. He should have plenty of time to do so. The war soon to be declared would possibly last half a man's lifetime; assuredly many years. Great Britain must fight to the last in a contest for her very existence, and at the close of which, whenever it came, she would be able justly to boast that she had gained all that she had not lost;—whilst Bonaparte and his allies would be tough, ugly customers. The tremendous naval armaments preparing by England, combined and directed by Nelson, would just as certainly, in Tracy's opinion, shatter, and speedily, the war-fleets of the enemy—sweep them from the seas—from the narrow seas at all events. Then would come Captain or Skipper Smith's opportunity. Not that he for a moment contemplated engaging in common, regular privateering. That would be a poor game to play. The enemy's ports would, in the case supposed, be so strictly blockaded, that the everywhere swarming British cruisers would be sure to snap up all, or pretty nearly all, the merchant-ships that might creep out to sea, and were worth snapping up; and meddling with an enemy's war-ship of any force whatever was quite opposed to Arthur Tracy's plans for despoiling the foe and enriching himself. The game of privateering, as vulgarly understood and practised, would consequently be a sorry, unpromising one, whilst that which he had conceived, and purposed under certain conditions to vigorously engage in, was rich in promise. He would have to patiently wait till the ground—the sea rather—was cleared for him by the British fleets; then Master Frenchman should see—what he should see! Meanwhile it was essential to carefully economize his cash; and this was one reason why he chose to travel on foot;—another yet more imperious one was, that in a stage-coach he might chance to meet with a lady or gentleman who knew the Arthur Tracy, Esq., at that moment believed to be, or in a few days would be believed to be, or to have been, food for fishes. Trudging along by unfrequented ways, he would incur no such hazard; and once humbly lodged in a northern sea-port town—keeping close and singing small—the story of his death fully accredited by everybody interested in the matter, the chance of recognition would be slight indeed.

The above may, I think, be taken as a sufficiently accurate sketch of the programme in process of elaboration by the embryo Filibuster—of a modern pattern—as he gaily plodded on his way from Portsmouth to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in an obscure part of which city or town he quietly settled till the time for action should arrive.

Of the next two years of his life it is only known that he lived frugally, gained money by a number of small, very safe, speculations, and made some half-dozen voyages in coal-ships—mainly with a view to exercise himself in practical seamanship—doggedly persevering in that dull, hum-drum life, especially to a young man of education and refinement, till the signal he so eagerly listened for pealed forth in the thunder of Trafalgar.

Four months after that crowning victory, that is, in February, 1806, Skipper Smith—as the Captain of the *Blue Jacket*, Letter of Marque, and perhaps the fastest craft that up to that time had ever sailed out of the Tyne, was familiarly named by his rollicking, devil-may-care crew—had completed his preparations. The *Blue Jacket*, built after a model selected by Skipper Smith himself—(to ourselves adopt that appellation for our raffish acquaintance, Arthur Tracy, for a time at least)—was a long, low vessel of sharp bow, flush deck, and hermaphrodite rig. She had three masts, fitted, instead of square, with large main-sails, cutter-fashion, and could, in proportion to her tonnage, show a prodigious canvass surface. Such a craft, though not so swift in running before the wind as a square sail ship, could almost eat into the wind's eye; and in nine cases out of ten would, for that reason, have a much better chance of escaping capture, by working to windward of a pursuer, than almost any other class of vessel. The *Blue Jacket* carried but one piece of ordnance, a brass pivot-gun, placed amidships. Her crew, of seventy men, were the pick of the Tyne for hardihood and daring. They were engaged upon the share system—Proprietor and Skipper Smith to have one-third of the plunder obtained; the remainder to be equally divided amongst the crew—Proprietor and Skipper charging them nothing for grub and grog. Although the *Blue Jacket* could boast of but one gun, she was plentifully supplied with small-arms—not alone ordinary sailor weapons, such as cutlasses, pistols, tomahawks, but a musket with bayonet for every man. There were also, neatly stowed away, French and Spanish soldier-uniforms, more than sufficient for all the *Blue Jackets*, including officers' coats, &c., for the Skipper and Mates. The purchase and fitting out of the *Blue Jacket* had exhausted her venturous owner's means—but what of that? There was plenty of money in France and Spain,—solid currency too: napoleons, five-franc pieces, gold onzas (not flimsy, inconvertible paper, as in England—thanks to the instinctive general conviction, that the Bonaparteian raw-head and bloody-bones could not possibly endure.) Also, plate—secular, spiritual, château, church, convent plate waiting, like resigned, acquiescent virgins, to be carried off. He had thoroughly conned his course,

had Skipper Smith—knew exactly what to do, and how to do it. Thus self-assured, confident, he gave the order one fine, breezy morning, to lift anchor and be off—an order obeyed with hilarious readiness, and—

“With a wet sheet and a flowing sea,
And a wind that follows fast;
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.”

This last line, by the way, is a puzzler, since how, with a wind that *follows* fast, a ship, good or bad, could leave the land she sailed from on the *lee*, would defy any one, except Allan Cunningham or a Horse-Marine, to understand.

The Blue Jacket is off, at all events, with a spanking breeze, her course shaped for the northern coast of France, to touch first at that of the Pas de Calais, somewhere between Gravelines and Calais; next to fold her ample white wings off the sea-board of the Somme; next not far from Dieppe, Seine Inférieure; next—next—and next! Well; we shall see.

Not immediately. *Place aux Dames*. We shall easily overtake the rakish Blue Jacket (swiftly as she bowls along over a sea upon which, thanks to Trafalgar and countless minor victories, there floats no tricolour), after waiting for a few months, or years—(such is the privilege of a prophet of the past)—upon the unhappy, and far from blameless lady, abandoned by a selfish sensualist at Saint Peter's Port, Guernsey.

Womanly dignity, the natural pride which must ever glow in the bosom of conscious beauty, helped no doubt to strengthen the spirit of Mrs. Arthur Tracy, to dry up the bitter tears wrung from her by the desertion of a man whom she had foolishly imagined that beauty would hold in thrall. But that which gave her far mightiest aid was the sweet image, shining through the moral gloom that encompassed her, of little Emmeline, left in the care of strangers, and scarcely thought of, the mother hotly blushed to remember, during that month of delirious dalliance.

There was a future for her in the life of her child. Animated by hope of that bright future, she would resolutely battle with the dark, doleful present; but to do so with a chance of success, it was essential to vigorously verify the conditions of the contest. Governing elements in the calculation were, that Lavinia Charlton, the niece to whom Mr. Ryder had devised his real and personal estate, was far from being an unamiable or selfish person, and that from the long since precarious state of her health she was not likely to marry. Moreover, she was known to have an inordinate share of family pride—a quality, or defect, which of itself might induce her to offer a home at Stone Hall to a near relative. Once domiciled there, it would surely not be difficult to win the lasting sympathy of a kind-hearted woman, who could not but feel, with something of remorse, that she had been enriched at her hapless cousin's cost. Then, Lavinia was fond of children; Emmeline, the most engaging child in the world, already gave promise of surpassing loveliness, so that it was not only

possible, but highly probable, she would be Miss Charlton's heiress, in which case a brilliant destiny, *et cetera*. Mothers have always been chartered dreamers.

Mrs. Arthur Tracy wrote, and very lengthily, to Miss Charlton by the next mail. She could better, more affectingly, state her sad case by letter than by a *viva voce* explanation. Without being guilty of untruth—not for the wide world, not for Emmeline, would she condescend to that in writing; without being guilty of untruth, she might so manipulate her phrases that, in the impression left upon the reader's mind, certain circumstances—which, written large, or brought out in the confusing cross-examination of a first personal interview, might damage her in her relative's estimation—would be so glided and gilded over, as to not in the faintest degree weaken the sorrowing sympathy which the abandonment of a wife, after a month's marriage, by a heartless, penniless adventurer, would be sure to excite in every well-regulated mind.

The lady reasoned rightly; and so judiciously did she paint her pitiable state, that quite an enthusiastic invitation reached her by return of post from Miss Charlton. Stone Hall was to be the home of herself and dear little Emmeline, as long as she chose to reside there,—and a heavy banker's draft was enclosed. The horizon was fast brightening in golden splendour.

By the same mail arrived the newspapers announcing the loss of the Ariadne Packet, on the Caskets; that but three persons, one John Smith and two sailors, had escaped drowning. Dreadful! A swift as terrible judgment had, then, overtaken Arthur Tracy! A wife, widowed by so frightful, so sudden a catastrophe, would be, *was*, greatly shocked. Nevertheless, the mirror at which she glances not very long afterwards reflects a face lustrous, palely lustrous, let us say, with conscious loveliness and freedom. A dreadful fate!—she shuddered to think of it;—and her jewels were gone!—true, but—(another proud glance at the large, clear mirror)—very young still—and, folly to affect not to know, very handsome! Perhaps Mrs. Arthur Tracy did not just then anticipate that the supposedly drowned husband would, in the fulness of time, be the father of a supposedly posthumous child—hers! That knowledge might not, however, have much changed the situation, in her view of it.

The imaginary widow sailed from Guernsey to Plymouth, with the intention of passing through Bristol on her way to London and Norfolk. She was desirous—in a languid degree—of acquainting herself with the exact circumstances incident to the downfall of the House of Tracy; and especially to ascertain if there were any chance, however remote and shadowy, that in the event of her giving birth to a son or daughter of Mr. Arthur Tracy, deceased, he or she might by possibility benefit by the wealth of said deceased's maternal uncle—the Mr. Sherwood, for many years located at Madras, of whom she had frequently heard mention.

Mr. Beadon received her with a sort of grim civility, which gradually softened to politest complaisance under the influence of the charming woman's

winning grace—her subdued, beseeching deprecation of his displeasure. In sooth, that vibrating, patient voice of hers, pitched artistically, would have sung the savageness out of a bear, particularly a bachelor-bear of some sixty years of age. I am not sure that she might not have married him off-hand; but whether so or not, she so interested him that he promised to do all in his power for her with Mr. Sherwood, from whom a letter had been received announcing that he had wound up his business affairs, and was about to embark for England, with an enlarged liver. The lawyer zealously kept his word; and the lady, before many months had passed, knew that she had never smiled and sighed to more profitable purpose than on that fortunate day in Bristol.

Her life-bark so hopelessly wrecked, apparently, in the late rude gale, now gaily sailed with wind and stream over a summer sea. Miss Charlton, a confirmed, fast-failing invalid, received the pensive widow and her child with affectionate cordiality, and long before the next day dawned there was simmering at the pensive widow's heart a comforting conviction that she would herself be mistress of Stone Hall and its adjuncts, before the world's great clock had again twice tolled a dead year's funeral knell.

The Poet of Life truly tells us, that, when sorrows come, they come not single spies, but in battalions. It is sometimes the same with Fortune's favours; as witness the experiences of Mrs. Arthur Tracy, crowded into the brief space of some twenty months. The recital reads like the fragment of a leaf torn out of a Registrar-General's record.

Mrs. Arthur Tracy gave birth, at Stone Hall, to a son, baptized, not Arthur, after his supposedly drowned father, but James, after Mr. Sherwood. To him Mr. Sherwood, immensely rich, and dead of enlarged liver, bequeathed all he possessed, with trusteeship during infancy to the mother; and to crown all, about three or four months subsequent to the decease of Sherwood, Lavinia Charlton, spinster, departed this life, having previously devised her estate, real and personal, to "her cruelly wronged, most estimable cousin, Lydia," with remainder to her daughter: the magnificent bequest clogged with but one condition—that Mrs. Tracy should forthwith take the formal steps necessary to obtain her Sovereign's licence to assume the name of Charlton: Emmeline and James to be also Charltons. . . . Thus it fell out, that when Skipper Smith, believing his wife had long since passed to Paradise, sailed out of the Tyne in the Blue Jacket on his famous cruise, with the serene assurance of being a widower, his wife had become, by royal favour, Mrs. Charlton—by favour of munificent bequests, one of the richest relicts in Norfolk. He not knowing! *Had* he known! There is a misty meaning in Mr. Disraeli's remark, that a narrative of the consequences of events which never happened (for example, had Napoleon *won* Waterloo!) would make a remarkable history. No doubt of it; and Mr. Disraeli, a fine hand at fiction-history, should write it.

TRADITIONS OF THE CÔTE D'OR.

THE ancient province of Bourgogne, like that of Bretagne, is peculiarly rich in historic and legendary lore. From the first representative of the Bourguignon dynasty—Gundichar of Worms, who helped Pharamund and his Franks to break up whatever of the once-famed Roman Empire Alaric and his Visigoths left still remaining—down to “gentle Mary” the last of her race, the Dukes and Duchesses of Burgundy have ever played a conspicuous role in French story. During the first half of the fifteenth century, and more, their Court rivalled that of any monarch in Europe. But Charles-le-Téméraire paid the forfeit of his rashness on the battle-field of Nancy, and Louis XI. clutched his rapacious hand on gentle Mary’s Burgundian coronet. Fourteen years later, his son and successor Charles VIII., by forcibly espousing its youthful Duchess, added that of Brittany likewise to the Crown of France. Thus did father and son rob two orphan heiresses of their heritage; and Europe looked on with folded arms at the robbery! But conquest is not conversion. Poland and Hungary are living witnesses of this; and so are Bourgogne and Brittany, though in a lesser degree. They are French, it is true, in laws and taxation; but four centuries of occupation have done but little towards effacing their hereditary habits and feelings. The Bourguignons are more loyal, if you will, but not a whit less tenacious of ancient customs than the Bretons. And, as far as the French language, properly so called, is concerned, a Parisian exquisite would have just as much chance of making himself understood among the genuine bourgeoisie of a Bourguignon village, as if he attempted, upon entering a *cabaret* on the fair-day of Rennes, to join in conversation with the worthy cattle-dealers of Cornouaille.

We were, naturally, long desirous of visiting those juicy realms of Beaune and Chambertin. But do not judge us rashly, kind reader! Our anxiety, we assure you, did not arise solely from a yearning after the *boisson des rois*, albeit we well remembered how truthfully and pithily Erasmus had summed up the delights afforded to the generality of travellers by a visit to Burgundy:—“*O felicem Burgundiam filiam dignam quæ mater hominum dicatur, posteaquam tale lac habet in uberibus!*” Ours was rather a literary or antiquarian thirst. We wished to visit the cradle of Bedford’s wife, and, better still, to converse with the “*braves Bourguignons*” themselves, as best we could, and learn some of their traditional stories from their own lips. With this intent, we betook ourselves to the Terminus of the Chemin de Fer de Lyon, Boulevard-Mazas, on a bright July morning—the year is of no importance; and having duly munified ourselves with a ticket, and *billet de baggages*, as prescribed in the “*Livret des Heures de Departs*,” &c., took our seat in a well-cushioned carriage; and, after an agreeable journey of some four hours, found ourselves at the station of Montbard—one hundred and fifty miles, or thereabouts, south-east of Paris.

Resisting the polite, and, we make no doubt, disinterested invitations of divers *commissionnaires* who, in the kindest manner possible, volunteered to conduct us to the "Point-du-Jour," or "Hôtel de l'Ecu," we procured a *voiture*, and, partly retracing the route we had been just pursuing, arrived, in less than twenty minutes, at the residence of a friend who had frequently invited us to spend a few weeks with him in the quiet valley of La Brenne.

Needless to say, the reception of Mr. L'Anglais was a warm one; for, be it remarked, the French are always kind and courteous—nay, thoroughly hospitable—to the English-speaking stranger, who is invariably styled *Anglais*, though his home may be by the Shannon or the Tweed.

The château was situated in the neighbourhood of the little town of Buffon, of which the celebrated naturalist, George Louis Le Clerc, became first Count in 1774. The great zoologist was, as might well be expected, the lion of the locality; and to every spot consecrated by his presence were we scrupulously conducted by our enthusiastic host, who was, not without reason we must admit, quite *fier* of his distinguished fellow countryman.

Our first visit was to the Castle, or rather, what now remains of the once famous Castle of Montbard, its donjon and rampart. The former consists of a solid, square tower, about a hundred and twenty feet high, divided into four vaulted storeys or compartments. In appearance, it is precisely similar to those Keeps of the same period—fourteenth century—which every tourist must have noticed in such abundance throughout Ireland. Near the donjon stands another tower, circular in form, but so changed by time and modern improvements (?) as to leave the beholder at a loss to determine what its original construction or dimensions might have been. Will it be believed—and yet there is no doubting it—that it was Buffon's own hand that completed, in 1742, the ruin of this historic monument, commenced by Louis XIV. in 1682? The Dukes of Bourgogne kept it well, till Charles the Bold fell at Nancy. With him perished the glory of the palace-fortress wherein Philip the Hardy first welcomed his Flemish bride, Margaret, to the land of France—the same in which Jean Sans Peur spent his boyhood, where Bedford married Anna, and Arthur of Brittany Margaret, both sisters of Philip le Bon—that Philip who gave to Europe the order of the Golden Fleece, which for ages could boast of the proudest chivalry of Christendom among its members. Under Louis XI., the ancient home of Mary of Burgundy passed into the possession of a Court minion, De Rothelin by name. In subsequent times, war and neglect contributed much to change its ancient appearance; but it remained for Buffon to level the little of its "fair proportions" that still outlived the ravages of time and warfare. We cannot but admire his love for the rare exotics which his taste and knowledge introduced into Europe; but surely there was space enough for their culture in his broad domains, without diminishing for that purpose the little that remained, in

1742, of the olden Keep of the Dukes of Burgundy! One, we should imagine, ought to have preferred a fern or an ivy-leaf, indigenous of such a ruin, to the fairest exotics of either hemisphere.

After hearing from our friend, on whose authority we could rely, all about the conversion of the Castle esplanade into a flower-knot, and the demolition of vast piles of mason-work for that purpose, our interest in Buffon's whereabouts while on earth was, we must confess, considerably diminished.

Again and again we visited the old Keep, in which our companion could see nothing but vestiges of Buffon, but which, to us, was replete with far more interesting reminiscences. Our excursions extended also to the ancient Abbey of Fontenay, and the ruined Castle of Montfort—of which, more anon.

In these excursions, which were generally on foot, ample opportunity was afforded us of studying the manners and dialect of the peasantry dwelling in the *Combes* (valleys) of the *Côte d'Or*. Simple in habits, picturesque in costume, and most courteous in answering every query of ours, they seemed to us, whilst we tarried amongst them, a most interesting race—nor has time changed our good opinion of them. But, for some time, a great barrier to our acquisition of knowledge among them lay in our medium of interchanging ideas. We flattered ourselves that, with our knowledge of French, we could “pass” in any *arrondissement*, from Mouscron to Hieres! We had learned it “*à la mode Parisienne!*” nor did the worthy Bourguignons, we opine, ever dream for one moment of our being anything else than a genuine son of Gaul! But all to no purpose. We were *too* grammatical—too elevated in our style of parlance, and had to come down from our stilts ere the untutored peasants, whom we met with, in our rambles by the Armançon, or Brenne, could fathom the depth of our meaning! “*Faut ben vous souvenir, Monsieur, que nous sommes Bourguignons—Ca cet vrai, Monsieur,*” was an apologetic phrase of such frequent usage among them, when at a loss to understand “Mr. Le Parisien,” that we shall never forget it. We, gentle reader, represent Mr. Le Parisien! The Bourguignons were *only* Bourguignons—that is, in their notion, foreigners in their own land; and our worthy host, so far from coming to our relief in any case of peculiar perplexity, seemed only to rejoice at our temporary embarrassment, invariably exclaiming, with a hearty laugh,—“*Faut ben savoir Mr. que moi aussi je ne suis que Bourguignon!*”

But we are not writing a history of Bourgogne. Neither do we mean to enter on any lengthened description of its inhabitants, or recondite analysis of its ancient dialect—the same, perhaps, in which Mary plighted her troth to “Kaiser Maximilian”—but, with our kind reader's permission, will take the liberty of introducing a few genuine Bourguignons of whom we have heard tell in our wanderings, and with whom he has, perhaps, not yet made acquaintance.

Every one is familiar with the fairies of Ireland. Crofton Croker has devoted a whole volume to them; and they owe much to another writer, of whom, in this work, we may not speak. Burns has immortalized—if they ever were mortal—the bogles, and kelpies, and spunkies of Scotland. The Bard of Avon, and Spenser, and Parnell have written and sung of Oberon, and Mab, and the pranksome elves that whilom dwelt

“In Britain’s isle and Arthur’s days,
When midnight fairies danced the maze.”

German bards have, likewise, sung of the wild Jager huntsman of the Rhineland, of Lurley and Undine, and the delusive tricks of the Tuckbold. The story of those gigantic or pigmy sprites has been written in every tongue. They have lived in every land. But, alas!

“—That pleasant time hath vanished; for our wretched doubts have banished
All those graceful spirit-people, children of the earth and sea,
Whom, in days now dim and olden, when the world was fresh and golden,
Every mortal could behold in haunted rath and tower and tree!”

The “good people” are no longer visible, on May-eves, in Ireland. The “midnight fairies” have ceased to tread the mazes of “merrie England.” And the shrill whistle of the Rheinische Eisenbahn has, we fear, scared away for ever the fascinating sprite of the Lurleifelsen. The same causes that have affected other lands have produced similar results in the Côte d’Or—once the head-quarters of all the Fées of Bourgogne. But though the Fées are seen no more as of old, their memory still lives in local tradition; and, in our occasional rambles through the valleys of La Brenne, we have learned so much regarding them, that we feel warranted in introducing a few of them, almost as old acquaintances, to our reader.

The sprite most frequently met with in Bourgogne, in “the pleasant time,” whose evanescence the above-cited poet so pathetically laments, was known by the name of LA VIVRE. We know not by what precise English term to designate this most unwelcome apparition, whose presence was an infallible omen of death, within a year, either to the party having the ill-luck of meeting with it, or to some loved member of his family. It was usually seen on Saturday nights; and the form under which it most frequently appeared was that of a white spaniel, or water-dog. Nor was it alone a sure harbinger of death, but, moreover, served as a decoy to allure its victims into the unholy fellowship of unhallowed sprites, who generally kept revel under some aged chesnut-tree in the vicinity.

To us, who have learned something of fairy-land, this specimen of the “graceful spirit-people” seems to be a combination of the Irish *Tinnageolane*, or “Will-o-the-wisp,” and Banshee. It certainly possesses all the malignant characteristics, without the aerial appearance of the former; while, though not appearing in human guise, it is equally prophetic of death with the latter.

But where shall we find a mate for the second visitor from fairy-land,

whose sole delight seemed to consist in disturbing the peaceful slumbers of harmless Bourguignons? This latter worthy rejoiced in the name of LE FLOU—and here, again, we have to regret our inability to discover an English word sufficiently precise to convey an idea of him to our reader. We will try, however, to make up for this deficit by a description of his habits and appearance.

Like the “Phooka” of the sister-isle, the Flou seems to have been a perfect Proteus in his powers of personal transformation. But he generally appeared in the shape of a monster bird which perched on the pillow of the sleeper, and by a gentle motion, at first, of his wings, fanned him into a deep slumber. By degrees the agreeable and refreshing current of air produced by this fanning became surcharged with a strong sulphureous odour which completely suspended respiration, and utterly prostrated the victim. The Flou then pounced upon him, and kept him as it were riveted to his couch, while cold perspiration flowed in copious streams from every pore. In this state the wretched sufferer remained till some noise in the apartment, or the incipient approach of daylight, put his tormentor to flight and awoke him.

We are at a loss, as we have already insinuated, to find, within the realms of fairy-land, a fitting mate for this malignant monster! He certainly does not figure in Queen Mab's *cortège*. Her sprites, however mischievous, have, generally speaking, some redeeming qualities; but we confess we have looked in vain for any in the Flou—that is, if he has been fairly represented to us by our Bourguignon informants. Our “wretched doubtings” have suggested to us, that, mayhap, this formidable Flou was, after all, nothing more than the equally troublesome visitor known to ourselves as Nightmare. But we make this statement without prejudice to that of the worthy Bourguignons—who are, no doubt, best informed on their own affairs.

Besides the Vivre and Flou, which were common to the entire district of the Côte d'Or, there existed another veritable *loup-garou* whose malevolence seems to have been of a purely local character, being restricted to the immediate neighbourhood of Montfort. This supernatural being dwelt in the wood of Bocavaux, and was designated LA BARONNE. Its appearance was that of a huge she-wolf, grey with age, and protected by a shaggy hide utterly impervious to either bullet or sabre-thrust.

Between the Baronne and hunters of the vicinity there existed, from time immemorial, a deadly feud. For generations they had sought her destruction—but sought it in vain. Not a prize marksman among them that had not exhausted his cartouche-box, over and over, in fruitless efforts to bring her down. More than once they were ready to affirm on oath they had seen the very bullet strike her. Still, no trace of blood was to be seen; and, to their deep mortification, a few paces further on in the forest convinced them that their hereditary foe was still at large—scathless as ever. Nor was she, upon her part, a less determined enemy.

Night after night she drained the cows of their milk; and in the rot among their sheep, glanders in their horses, worms in the vine, and smut in the wheat, they had unmistakable evidence of her persistent malignity! Nay, more, she went so far as to cause the very horses to kick, and the hatching hens to break their eggs! No wonder, then, that the mutual feud was a deadly one.

Our sympathies, we must admit, were all on the side of the sufferers, when we heard this woeful tale of wolfish venom; and we asked, in astonishment, why this paragon of malevolence was honoured with the name of Baroness?

"*Mais, Monsieur, c'était la vieille Baronne de Montfort elle même qui faisait tout ce dégât, sous la figure d'une louve,*" replied a dozen voices, in evident astonishment at our ignorance of this well-known fact in local history.

"Oh, indeed! But how came she to be changed into a wolf—and such a wicked one too?" was our interrogative response.

"*C'est qu' elle était méchante,*" replied an elder of the party; "and many's the one she caused to be flung into LE TROU DES FÉES, to have their bones ground in the mill of Bocavaux."

Having heard thus much to the disadvantage of the poor Baroness, our attention was naturally directed to the new evidence of fairy existence afforded by the allusion to the Trou des Fées. This, we learned, was the rendezvous, not alone of fays, but of all the wizards and witches of the district, who assembled there, like the weird women in Macbeth, to keep their unhallowed watches. We were further informed that it was on Saturday nights, precisely as the clock chimed midnight, the grand revels commenced. The fête took place at their favourite trysting-place, beneath the shade of an aged chesnut whither the ministering Vivres had previously beguiled as many erring wayfarers as possible. The festivities usually opened with a dance, in which his Satanic Majesty himself led off the senior witch as partner, and the festive scene was lit up with lurid torches, whose sulphureous odour afforded a most fragrant perfume to the guests. After the dance came supper, the leaves of the hoary chesnut being, by some mysterious alchemy, suddenly transmuted into a dazzling service of gold and silver plate. The party was waited upon by a huge owl, who, like the Flou, fanned them occasionally with his wings, and produced a delightful freshness which served them as ice for their Chambertin. But, no sooner did the cock crow than all trace of festivity disappeared; and nothing remained, but the odour ever exuding from the Trou and the withered grass round the chesnut, to tell of last night's orgies.

Such a recital—every word of which was uttered with the utmost earnestness—went far to convince us, despite our city scepticism, that, though within four hours of Paris, we had indeed happened upon an unknown land—a true fairy region; and we at once resolved to visit the Trou and its marvellous chesnut.

An agreeable walk along the bank of the Dandarge brought us to our destination in something less than an hour;—but we must confess that, on arriving, we felt somewhat disappointed. The celebrated Fairy Cave, as it then appeared before us, and as we still well remember it, was nothing more than a deep, moss-covered aperture, caused by the falling in of part of the roof of a subterraneous passage constructed by the Barons of Montfort for supplying their castle with water in time of siege. The existence of this passage was, as may be easily imagined, kept a profound secret; nor was it discovered till time accidentally revealed it, by sapping its foundations and causing part of its roof to fall in. But such an explanation, simple as it may appear to our reader and ourselves, would never satisfy the credulous rustics of Montfort. The oldest amongst them had never heard their grandfathers nor fathers tell of any such subterraneous work having been carried on at the Castle. All they knew was, that whatever once got into that fearful chasm never again returned by the way it entered, but either sank to the bottom, or, more wonderful still, came forth from the earth again fully two miles off—but only to be instantly crushed to atoms by the mill-wheel of Bocavaux. What further proof of its preternatural construction was requisite? None! And so they called it, and probably call it to this day, “*Le Trou des Fées*.”

Our excursion to the Côte d'Or, and the pleasant rambles we have had with its simple-hearted inhabitants, have left lasting memories with us. It is not, however, to be understood that, in what we have written, we mean to describe the district as it now is in point of credulity, but as it unquestionably was—and that at no very distant period. Nor are we astonished at this over credulousness on the part of the unlettered vine-dressers of Montfort and its vicinity, when we remember, that, for well nigh a quarter of a century, that is to say, from the frenzied epoch of the Revolution to the year 1816, the parish in which the *Trou des Fées* is situated was without a pastor. During that entire period, there was no minister of religion to baptize the young, to perform the marriage ceremony for the adult, or to administer the last rites or read the burial-service for the aged. Young men grew up, and old men died off, without any religious rite or ceremony whatever. Such was not required—nay, it was absolutely forbidden, by the “*Genius of Liberty!*” The priesthood of Dijon were banned or massacred, and their churches and dwellings razed to the ground, or appropriated to other uses; nor was it till the allied troops bivouacked in the ruined fortress of Montbard that a clergyman was able to find subsistence in the locality to which we especially refer. No wonder, then, if the poor Bourguignon peasant, robbed of the true worship of God by men who should have known better things, turned his aspirations after the supernatural to creations of his own diseased fancy, honouring or propitiating them according as he revered or feared them. His error consisted rather in a superabundance than in a lack of belief. It was

superstition—between which and downright infidelity true faith holds as it were a middle place.

What wonder, we repeat, if poor sheep so long without a shepherd went astray, when we find men of far higher intelligence stooping to fantasies even still more ridiculous! If we are to credit Villeman—and we see no reason for questioning his testimony—the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, philosopher as he was, and Sylla, the subtle statesman and renowned general, were firm believers in dreams. Cicero assures us that Cataline, a Roman *prætor*, and a man of cultivated though depraved intellect, had an altar erected in his house to an eagle, which he worshipped, with special veneration, as often as he meditated any new scheme of villany. Even Nero was not utterly void of faith in something supposed to possess supernatural power; for we are informed by D'Argens, that thrice each day he offered sacrifice to the image of an infant. Diderot and D'Alembert, philosophers *par excellence!* placed fullest confidence in the efficacy of charms. Nor has popular tradition yet forgotten the “*oraculum*” of the victor of Marengo. Hobbes was fearfully apprehensive of ghosts, and the Marquis of Argens could never sit at table when there were thirteen present! Frederick the Great was accustomed to make a personal inspection of the dinner-cloth; and whenever it happened that any of the knives or forks were laid crosswise, he carefully arranged them, firmly believing the former position to be a sure forerunner of evil!

With such examples, selected at random from a host of similar ones before us, shall we not be disposed to deal mercifully with the poor housewives of the Côte d'Or for having, erst, placed their bee-hives in mourning on the death of some member of the family, to prevent a recurrence of a like, or perhaps a still greater, calamity!—for refusing to give their daughters in marriage on Wednesday, or set out on a journey on Friday; and for regarding the accidental upsetting of the salt-cellar, or the lighting of *three* candles at a time, just as unlucky as the seating down of thirteen guests together to a meal?

We are no advocates for the perpetuation of superstitions, which we hold to be not only ridiculous in themselves, but clearly at variance with the first precept of the decalogue. Neither do we mean to uphold those who “regard vanities to no purpose.” But we would fain deal lightly with those simple-minded beings who, like the peasants of Ireland, and those of Bourgogne, sinned for a time, we should hope through inculpable ignorance. Both are now abundantly provided with teachers, whose duty it is to dispel such ignorance. Nor have those teachers been idle; and hence it is that Phooka and Banshee, Flou and Vivre, have vanished—to take their place, henceforth, among the things that are not—to live but in fancy, or in the fire-side traditions of the past.

AN OLD MAN'S STORY.

I AM an old man; yet it only seems a very short time since I climbed the tall poplar-tree that grew before the Vicarage, in search of the starling's nest. I can fancy I hear the shout that greeted my descent with the long-coveted prize, and feel again the crimson mounting to my cheeks as it did when, turning to the Vicarage, I saw an expression of pain on the pale face of my father, as he stood at the Study window.

It seems to me but yesterday since I stood in the centre of that group of lads, and now—

"They are all gone, the old familiar faces."

Dick, the surgeon's son, died many years ago in India. Harry Vernon, the bravest of them all, was slain on the field of Waterloo; and when the village bells rang for the victory, the rudest fellow in the village was touched as he passed the Grange and saw the blinds down, and knew of the breaking heart of old Widow Vernon.

It was a sad day for us at the Vicarage, especially for Emily. My father stayed in his Library all day; though I do not think he read a page in any of his books—even in his favourites, Sophocles and Horace.

Emily and my mother were in my mother's chamber all the day. From that day Emily gradually drooped and faded. Her beautiful face grew more exquisitely beautiful—her dark, deep, eyes became more full and lustrous, but they wandered restlessly, as though seeking some missing resting-place; her golden hair—(I have still a thick lock of it amongst an old man's memorials of other days, "the days of auld langsyne")—hung more carelessly about her shoulders, and her pale cheeks were suffused with a rosy tint that gradually deepened into a burning crimson, whilst her sweet voice sunk almost into a whisper. As I looked at her, her startling beauty reminded me of the language of the Book my mother used to read to her as she lay on the couch in the drawing-room. Her "face was as the face of an angel."

Ah, me! how I am wandering from the circumstance I sat down to write about: but you must forgive an old man, for whenever I think of Emily it is always so. Let me see—yes, I remember perfectly.

It was Christmas Eve, in the year 1791, and the snow had been falling heavily all the day, blotting out the hedges and walls which surrounded the Vicarage, and burying the sun-dial that Willie and I had carved with great pains during the long winter evenings.

I had come from my father's Study, where I and Willie had been having our usual lesson in Latin. Willie was a high-spirited lad, of a very loving and affectionate disposition; though, when excited or in a passion, his temper was fearful to behold, and his eyes flashed with a strange light that made us all tremble, except my father. It was some time before my father came down; but when he did, we heard him lock

the Study door after him, and he came down alone. He looked very stern and angry: he was in one of those moods which sometimes took possession of him when he was disturbed. Though my father was always silent when in these moods, yet I always thought there was a vivid resemblance between them and Willie's outbreaks of passion.

"Willie will not come down to-night," said he; "I have left him in the Study with a lesson that will keep him all night."

I thought I saw a tear start from my mother's eye, as she turned her face to the window and looked out upon the snow, which still continued to fall heavily.

It was the anniversary of Emily's birthday, and we were expecting a party of young friends (children of the neighbouring gentry) to pass the evening at the Vicarage.

It began to grow dark about four o'clock, and then our company began to arrive. There were, first, the children of Squire Harcourt, who came wrapped in soft furs and shawls in the old-fashioned-cozy family carriage, with its couple of docile greys. Then came Harry Vernon, and his sisters, Emily and Agnes; and, as the time wore on, about a score of young people were assembled at the Vicarage. It was a merry party. My father, whom it would be an injustice to represent as an unkind man, threw himself into the spirit of our merriment as though he had been one of us. The furniture, excepting the old-fashioned piano, had been removed from the drawing-room, and it and the sitting-room had, by the removal of a partition, been thrown into one, making a large and commodious room, which had been plentifully hung with holly and other evergreens. The red berries gleamed like tiny masses of fire beneath the dark-green glossy leaves, and here and there my sister's hands had gracefully arranged bunches of many-coloured ribbons.

Many inquiries were made for Willie, and for a moment or two a shadow seemed cast upon the pleasure of the children when they were told that Willie, the presiding spirit of fun in every juvenile party, would not be with them; but all feeling of disappointment vanished as the time wore on—except from one gentle, loving spirit.

I knew that my mother was thinking of the dear boy in the room above us, for Willie was my mother's favourite. She was thinking of a handsome face pressed against the door, and of a tiny ear close to the keyhole, listening to the voices of the merry groups below. She knew those sounds would be exquisite torture to the prisoner. She knew how that quick eager spirit would fret in the Study above like a wild bird in a cage!

Sometimes I saw her whisper to my father,—and then his face grew hard and dark, and my mother's yet more sad and pained.

My sister played, with exceeding grace, some simple airs upon the old piano; and then—the boys choosing their partners from the graceful little maidens who stood with eager, blushing faces and beseeching eyes beneath

the holý in a corner of the room—the dance began. Whilst this was going on, I saw my father put something into my mother's hand. It was the Study key. With a grateful smile—oh, how sweet that smile was!—she left the room. I stole after her to the foot of the wide, old-fashioned staircase; I saw her glide swiftly up the stairs; and I could hear when she unlocked the door,—and when she opened it to pass in, the moonlight streamed brightly through the doorway on to the dark landing, and as its light fell on the face of the old clock which stood there, I saw it wanted but a few minutes of ten o'clock.

I had not stood more than a minute at the foot of the stairs when I heard my mother cry "Willie!" Then I heard a piercing scream, and she suddenly passed me, her face white as the snow that lay outside on the steps, and rushing into the room where my father was playing with the children, went straight up to him, and crying "Willie's gone! oh, Willie, Willie, darling!" fell fainting at his feet.

My sister immediately left the piano, and with the aid of some cold water, my mother was restored very soon. Of course, this put an end to the festivities, and the children were soon on their way home, except Harry Vernon, who stayed to assist in the search for Willie. Afterwards my mother told us, that as she was endeavouring to amuse a group of the younger children, she heard Willie's voice distinctly calling "Mamma! mamma!" She instantly got the key, as I have before related, and went up to the Study. As soon as she opened the door she felt the window was open, by the rushing of the cold, frosty air past her. The instant she entered the room, she felt a tremour seize her. Why did not Willie spring to meet her? She felt in a moment that Willie was not there! The Study lamp was flickering out; there stood my father's easy-chair opposite a table on which lay his books and manuscripts, and amongst them poor Willie's soiled and hated Latin Grammar.

He must have climbed down the side of the old house, by the aid of the ivy-stems, which grew up to the pinnacles of the gables, on to the top of the antique portico, and from thence have leaped to the ground. Willie, agile as a squirrel, could easily have accomplished this.

In a few moments from the discovery of Willie's absence we—that is, my mother and father, Harry and myself, and two servants, one of them old Walter, who passionately loved Willie—were out in search of the missing one.

The snow was still falling heavily, but by the light of the moon, which was at full, we could see almost as distinctly as by daylight.

Strange to say, my mother went instinctively towards a deep pool of water, beneath the orchard wall, called by the villagers the Black Pool—so called because of its depth. Near it, and overshadowing it, grew an old gnarled thorn-bush, which, after many winters' frosts and snows, still preserved its vitality. It was a pleasant place in summer; the broad, fan-like ferns, with their beautiful serrated leaves, loved to grow

there, and in that old thorn, a summer or two before, a nightingale had made its haunt, and sung through the long star-lit nights, and Willie and I had lain awake for hours listening to it.

I never, even now, hear the song of the nightingale without hinking of my darling brother and the chamber in which we slept. The villagers said it was haunted by something more than the nightingale; but that I never positively knew.

Well; I saw my mother bend down close to the water a moment, and then suddenly turn and pick something up from the ground at the foot of the thorn. She held it out a moment in the moonlight, and then gave a wild cry of pain. It was a little handkerchief of Willie's, edged with a particular kind of lace which she had put on herself. The water was still and rippleless—save a slight tremour, which might be caused by the breeze—and reflected the quiet stars in its dark face.

My father, who was a good swimmer and a stranger to fear, quietly took off his coat, and in a moment was down at the bottom of the pool. I shall never forget the expression of anxiety on my mother's face as she bent forward over the pool. Her large dark eyes had something awful in the intensity of their gaze; her thin white hands were clasped convulsively upon her bosom; her lips were drawn tightly across her small white teeth, and we could hear her breathe as though she had been running rapidly.

It seemed an age before my father reappeared; but when he did, it was with Willie's pale, handsome face, looking more beautiful than ever, lying on his shoulder, and his long dark hair, which it always seemed a shame to cut, falling over his arm! I think I hear my mother's wild, despairing cry now, at the distance of seventy years. I have heard it at night in my quiet study; I have heard it on board-ship, when the storm-winds have thrown us like a feather amongst the frothing waves; I have heard it in old continental cathedrals, above the voices of the choir, the music of the organ, and the ringing and clashing of the bells.

Hush! I thought I heard it then! My father carried Willie home, and old Walter and the other servant assisted my mother. Willie was instantly got to bed, and the ordinary means used for his restoration, whilst old Walter was sent off on the brown mare to the doctor's. We heard the dull, heavy sound of her hoofs upon the snow, as she went off at a swift pace down the carriage-drive. In a short time she came back, bringing the doctor.

My mother was bending over Willie, and nervously swaying herself backwards and forwards, when he came in; but she rose immediately, and with wide, flashing eyes, exclaimed—

"Oh! doctor, save my boy! Oh, Willie! Willie, darling! Speak to me, my child!"

I never read David's thrilling lament, "Oh, Absalom! my son, Absalom!" without thinking of my mother's great agony in Willie's

chamber. The doctor was a remarkably skilful man; but it seemed a hopeless case. How my mother's eager eyes followed all his movements!

At last, when we were just despairing, Willie gently opened his eyes—those magnificent eyes of his! There was an unspeakable ecstasy on my mother's face, the like of which I have never seen since, and never expect to see again. It was coming light when the doctor left us, and Willie was in a refreshing sleep.

The many-coloured rainbow of Hope now hung over the Vicarage, alas! soon to fade away, leaving us but the cold rain and dark clouds of a great sorrow.

After an hour or two of sleep, Willie awoke, and told my mother how he heard the shouts and laughter of the children in the drawing-room, and how the music seemed to taunt him; and then, how he became afraid, and dared not look where the shadows lay in the Library; and how, as he watched the moon rise through the poplars before the window, he was tempted to climb down by the ivy-stems; and how he had wandered to the Black Pool, and been tempted to spring across it to get a bunch of crimson berries that hung from a branch on the other side, thinking he would give them her; and how he had missed his footing and fallen backward into the pond. Then he told her how he rose to the surface,—and how he was falling into a sweet and pleasant slumber at the bottom with thoughts of her passing dream-like through his mind,—and how he felt some hand touch him, and an exquisite sensation of pain as if he were dying,—and that was all he knew. How my mother wept and smiled, and clasped him to her bosom, and called him her darling Willie! I need not tell you now how my poor father kissed him, and asked—ay, he, the stern disciplinarian, asked—pardon of his own child. Willie, fatigued with his long talk, fell asleep again; but it was a troubled, broken slumber. His cheeks grew crimson, and his breath quick and hot, and he trembled as though he were very cold.

The doctor came again,—but this time he shook his head, and said there was no chance for him. My mother and father watched him night and day; but he grew worse and worse. Now he would talk of the wild bee's nest he had found a few days ago in a bank in the wood,—then he would shout as if at play; and then, whilst my father covered his face with his hands and the big tears trickled through his fingers in an agony of *grief*, he would try to repeat his Latin, and failing to do so correctly, he would begin again, saying in beseeching tones, "Oh! papa, forgive me! I cannot!"

Willie died one morning, just as the old year was dying amidst frost and snow, repeating his Latin lesson, as my mother held his head with its splendid dark locks on her bosom, and his little hand lay in my father's trembling palm.

FOGGY THOUGHTS IN NOVEMBER.

HOLIDAY-SEEKING London—which, some months ago, faded away in the distance with a rattle of cabs and a waving of pocket-handkerchiefs—has at last returned to its proper home, and we shall soon realize the bustle and excitement consequent on the re-opening of “the season.” Holiday-seeking London has reaped a rich harvest of pleasure this fine autumn. It has been climbing manfully up Scotch mountains and over Swiss glaciers; it has put money into the pockets of landlord, chambermaid, and *garçon*; it has eaten shrimps and swallowed salt-water at the sea-side; it has flirted and gambled at German *spas*; and it has lounged lazily through German picture-galleries. Holiday-seeking London has returned, then—invigorated, perhaps—perhaps *blasé*, and with its purse at a low ebb. You can see it talking on ‘Change, prowling in Bride Lane, or riding in Rotten Row. The brown paper is taken from the windows of Belgravian drawing-rooms, and the chandeliers are again uncovered. There is bustle in the counting-house, brilliance in the drawing-room, and brightness in the Park. Holiday-seeking London has whiled away the autumn out-o’-doors, and now it will enjoy itself in-doors. The fogs in the street are not wholesome, and November has rather a sharp way of dealing with travellers.

I doubt not that the holiday-seekers were rather amazed, on returning home, at the fine tricks we had been playing before high heaven in their absence. When I say “we,” I mean those people whom business, poverty, or inclination has kept at home during the autumn, and of whom I myself am one. Pent up in the great city, I have led a lonely life for the last few months, haunted by the mocking shade of the railway gnome called BRADSHAW; and although I certainly have not blessed the stars which kept me in this Gehenna of streets and sewers, yet I have kept my eyes wide open. The singular dearth of all literary and political gossip—consequent on the continued absence of the great literary and political luminaries—has led me to a species of reading which, it is to be hoped, the purchasers of this Magazine do not cultivate. To be candid, I have devoted more time than usual to the perusal of shocking murders, savage assaults, railway accidents, and penny-a-liners’ news generally. The result has been the reverse of agreeable. I have been led into a dark train of reflection on statistics which admit of no very satisfactory solution. I have been puzzled and bewildered by facts which seem utterly incompatible with a civilized state of society. I have been driven, so to speak, into a morbid appreciation of painful criminal details. So, now that November has arrived, breathing thickly over the bosom of the great city, I find that my conclusions on certain subjects are as foggy as the season in which I write. Like other English householders, I feel puzzled by the present state of affairs, and I shall consequently put my remarks in the shape of simple suggestions.

In plain truth, the aspect of present affairs is unmistakably and wholly foggy. There is fog in London, and in all England; there is fog both at home and abroad. Never was there an atmosphere more calculated to lead careless people astray. In America, King Cotton is tottering on his throne, and it seems likely that he, the prime and secret mover of the revolution, will crush both the white man and the black man in his fall. In the meantime, the English manufacturer and the English weaver are lamenting in common; the former bewailing his market at New York, and the latter the loss of raw material. In Austria, Francis-Joseph has promulgated a new Constitution, which includes an Upper and a Lower House, like our Houses of Lords and Commons; but a more foggy and bewildering bit of business, with the exception of the same Emperor's facetious "Political Catechism," never emanated from the House of Hapsburg. In Poland, the patriots, in order to show their contempt for the Russian eagle, have, on some inconceivable principle, given up dancing. In Italy the Pope totters—peppered at morning and night by infatuated pamphleteers; while Louis Napoleon, in a dense mist of his own creating, ruminates darkly and inactively at the Tuileries. All this fog is in its essence political. Our own politicians, too, seem similarly swathed in the thick exhalations of the season. Mr. Roebuck still thinks the Emperor of Austria an angel; our noble Viscount, who stands at the head of the Government, has taken to giving "sops" to the Conservatives; and—But to go on further with the catalogue were superfluous. A more foggy state of affairs, moral, political, and literary, never existed.

And, first, as to the present state of the country morally and socially. Crime in England seems lately to have resolved itself into an epidemic. While petty crimes have decreased of late, great crimes have increased to an almost fabulous extent. Never was there a time when Murder was so common. We read of innocent, hardworking wives slain by spendthrift husbands—of patricide, matricide, and fratricide—of murder in all its revolting phases. Crimes of this kind have followed swiftly in the track of each other. No sooner had the public mind recovered from the shock caused by the infanticide at Strood, than an unfortunate servant-girl murdered her newly-born infant at Peckham. The murder at Stepney was closely followed by others very similar in character. It were useless to enumerate further individual cases. Of mysterious criminal affairs we have had no scarcity. The Northumberland Street tragedy, the singular circumstances of which can never be eradicated from the memory, has no parallel in all the romances of real life; and the crime of Richard Guinness Hill, who wilfully consigned his own child to want and degradation, painfully upsets our faith in the first instincts of human nature.

Around the Northumberland Street tragedy there still hangs a fog which it is difficult to penetrate. The morbid passion which converted a prosy bill-discounter into a romantic assassin seems sufficiently intel-

ligible; but one cannot help remarking the blundering manner in which the assassin arranged his plans for the disposal of his rival.

The public is in still greater fog about the motives which urged Richard Guinness Hill to the wretched course which has brought him within the clutch of the law, and about the relative complicity of Mrs. Hill; but, for obvious reasons, I shall not touch upon the subject here.

The question which presents itself to my mind is—Is, or is not, Murder epidemical? It is a well-known fact that the ghost of every lost woman who precipitates herself over Waterloo Bridge, or plunges head foremost into the Regent's Canal, returns to visit the streets in the shape of a suicidal mania; and, if we are to estimate the matter by the statistics of recent crime, the morbid effects of cases of murder would appear to be precisely similar. Is there, then, miasma in the moral fog which surrounds English homes just at present? If so, the sooner the atmosphere is fumigated of its corrupt elements, the better for our comfort and peace of mind. It seems to me that many of these corrupt elements are to be found in the always morbid and often grossly indecent reports which find their way into the columns of cheap and twelfth-class newspapers—the effect of which resembles the effect of many public executions, from which the low mob pass away with coarse laughter, more eager than ever to outrage the laws whose power they have just seen vindicated. I am afraid that the morality of the low press is at a very low ebb indeed, and I think that the schoolmaster and the clergyman should take the matter in hand vigorously. That the publicity given to cases of murder fails to awaken those sentiments which prevent bloodshed, is proved by the shocking growth of such crimes at a period when the newspaper Press is a fourth estate in the country. The grossly vulgar mind, which confounds brutality with manliness, and physical with moral strength, is intensely imitative. It is imitative in its caprices and in its crimes. Burke and Hare had their imitators, and for some time after their death the garotte mania ravaged society. So, after the execution of Palmer at Stafford, cases of murder by poisoning multiplied themselves enormously; and nothing could stop their increase until the communicated lunacy which caused them had thoroughly exhausted itself—until, I mean, the low mind began to thirst for novelty.

These remarks lead me to another question, with regard to which the public is still in a state of fog. I mean the Paper Duty Question. No sensible man can regret the withdrawal of an impost which laid a premium on ignorance, and taxed the self-education of the country; and the day which saw the abolition of the obnoxious duty must always remain a red-letter day in the national calendar. Now, the reading public is engaged at present in busily and somewhat perplexedly calculating the amount of benefit which it is likely to derive from a measure which improves the resources of the bookseller and the manufacturer; and in this calculation it is right to balance quality against quantity—quality against

cheapness! Perhaps it does not care to pay even a halfpenny for a peep into a darkly-illustrated Chamber of Horrors! Hitherto literature of a really healthy character has been out of the reach of the masses. Hitherto the masses have had to put up with the trash of *dilettanti* and penny-aliners—trash which has had a slow and pernicious influence on popular taste. Now, however, the superior orders of intellect will open up their treasures to the public gaze, and the result ought to be ultimately productive of those advantages which education is said to confer upon a people.

Personal considerations apart, we have indirect evidence that the public will benefit by the change, in so far as there will be placed at its disposal an improved order of literature. The Messrs. Chambers, always distinguished for the high tone of their publications, ceased their admirable "Miscellany of Tracts" when it had reached a circulation of 80,000 copies. From the commencement to the conclusion, the "Miscellany" had paid £5,000 paper duty—a sum which, had it remained with the publishers, would have been more than sufficient to enable them to go on with the publication. Mr. Charles Knight, another remarkable friend of knowledge, paid, in the course of twenty years, £50,000 paper duty; a large proportion of which sum would otherwise have benefited literary men and the public generally. The same gentleman paid to the Excise, for his "Penny Cyclopædia" alone, the sum of £16,500; and the publication was, as a consequence, not remunerative. It is due both to Messrs. Chambers and Mr. Knight to say, that they were most instrumental in agitating the question which at last brought about the removal of the obnoxious duty.

I should like to ramble a little through the fog which now covers the political horizon; but I am reminded that the conductor of this Magazine declines to discuss politics at all. Nevertheless, the fog is thick and cumbrous. In the midst of it I see Lords Derby and Palmerston having a tough fight for the mastery, the former seconded by Mr. Disraeli, and the latter by Mr. Gladstone. John Bull looks on placidly as umpire, and I think that the ring-keeper bears the burly proportions of Mr. Bright.

In the midst of the social, political, and literary fog which has enwrapped the metropolis for the last few months, there have occurred events calculated to cause great annoyance to the community. There have been the great fires, and especially the one in Tooley Street. There have been the railway accidents at Brighton and Hampstead. Of these latter one cannot but speak with indignation. Life has been recklessly sacrificed, property has been destroyed, simply because railway directors have desired to give larger dividends to the shareholders; that is to say, railway directors, whose funds are at a low ebb, have hit upon the method of running cheap excursion trains with dangerous frequency. It is the old story of the spider and the fly repeated. It is time Government stepped in with a strong hand to alter a state of things against which sufferers have but one remedy—Lord Campbell's Act—which affords no benefit or

chance of safety to those who lose their lives by railway accidents. Again, the fog has been visited from time to time by certain will-o'-the-wisps, after which our citizens have run in a vain hope of coming to some safe anchorage. Blondin was one of these. People flocked in crowds to the Crystal Palace, half expecting that the American would break his neck during his antics. The female Blondin (hear it, ye strong-minded women!) is another. This enterprising lady, clad as a Chinese boy, has crossed the Thames on a tight-rope drawn from Cremorne to the opposite side of the river. The "Colleen Bawn," that most successful of all "sensation" dramas, is another, and it has owed its success simply to fine scenery and striking situations. It is a will-o'-the-wisp that will perish when the general public know a little more about Mr. Fechter's "Hamlet"—no will-o'-the-wisp this, but a solid starry diamond, worthy to shine as a jewel in the crown of the great dramatist. Then there has been Mr. Buckle's "History of Civilization," the fatality of Scotch critics. Over and above all, the public has been haunted, tormented, tickled, puzzled, juggled, crushed into hopeless idiocy, by that inveterate enemy of Lindley Murray, that tricky jack-o'-lantern, that haunter of thick quagmires of slang, and deep ditches of bad English—BURLESQUE. What is the drama coming to? Shade of Avon! what means this miserable mumming? Is the British Stage to be usurped by an imp over whom neither common sense nor criticism has control? Is it not true that perversion of language reacts upon the brain, causing inextricable confusion of ideas, just as accuracy of language expresses accuracy of thought? I fear that Burlesque is a mockery, a delusion, and a snare; and I am glad that it seems to be dying out. Up till very lately it haunted almost every House in London; but now (Mr. Robson having shaken it off as an incubus) it finds its only harbour in a little pleasant bandbox of a theatre, situated somewhere near Temple Bar.

I have done. I have not attempted to be profound, nor witty, nor amusing. My paper is what London life is, and has been of late, and what my thoughts have been concerning London life—simply and suggestively foggy. I write in the midst of the dense exhalation, social, literary, political—general; but even as I write the fog is clearing away rapidly. Let us hope that with winter it will pass away, and that things will wear a brighter and a clearer aspect. In the meantime let us stir the fire, read the parliamentary reports and the new books, thank goodness for the abolition of the paper duty, go to the theatre, and lock the house-door carefully when we return, waiting patiently for that good time which will certainly come, when the dense fog clears away before a breath from all quarters of the globe, and reveals to our astonished gaze the fairy-created and peaceful INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF 1862!

FOR THE YOUNG OF THE HOUSEHOLD. IN COZY NOOK.

NELLY'S CHRISTMAS DAY.

BY FRANCES FREELING BRODERIP.

"AND this is Christmas Eve!" muttered Nelly to herself, as she stood at the door of the Ragged School in Blank Street. The noisy multitude forming the population of that establishment (all of whom by their garments amply confirmed the justice of the adjective), were pouring out on their various ways to their homes. Most of them, in honour of the season, had a sort of Christmas merriment in their faces and voices—for could they not feast their eyes, at least, on the rich fare set forth in the glowing shops? Accordingly, they went off in parties of two or three, slapping their thin arms over their threadbare garments, to delude themselves with the idea that they were getting warm. And two little girls were left alone on the school's stone doorsteps, one of them being a pretty, rosy child, in spite of her tattered attire. You could not fail to note, even under the mask of grime and dirt, that the little fat neck and the round dimpled cheeks were fair, or fail to observe that the tangled mass of hair had gleams of sunny gold in it, and would wave in curls if it could. Her companion was a contrast to her—for no amount of dress and curl could have made that homely face pretty. The only things that redeemed the face from positive ugliness were the quiet dark eyes,—not bright like sparkling beads, but calm and deep as a little moonlit brook.

"Yes, and we shan't have any meat or pudding, Nelly," said the little one, fretfully; it is not *our* Christmas Day; it is only for horrid, wicked, rich people, who won't go to heaven!"

"Hush! hush, Rosie!" answered the elder; "you know it is Christmas Day for every one alike; and, at any rate, we can hear the bells chime as well as all the rest."

"I should like to taste plum-pudding," grumbled Rosie. "Look, Nelly! here's a splendid shop!—such plums and currants,—such lots of sugar,—and oh!—oranges!"

"Don't they look nice?" answered Nelly; "and how pretty the bits of holly are, with red berries! If I could get a piece with plenty of berries on it, I would make you a necklace, Rosie."

This idea delighted the younger one, and beguiled her way home more quickly than usual; so that the two lonely little creatures soon stood on the doorstep of the house where they lived—all that they knew of *home*. It was still more dreary now; for their mother, who was a charwoman, had met with an accident by falling on the ice one cold night, and was now in the hospital. The poor cannot choose for themselves, or arrange matters as they wish; so the sick mother was only too thankful to be able to provide money sufficient to find a home for another week, and just *bread* enough to feed her forlorn little ones—who were left in charge of a kind-hearted but ignorant neighbour. This care, cheerfully given, consisted mainly, however, in lighting the miserable scrap of fire, and giving them their small portion of food, and over and above keeping what she called "an eye on

'em." So that little Rosie (whose hard-working mother never forgot, even after the hardest day's work, to give her children a good hearty wash) looked up with a perfect mask of what the neighbour called "only a little bit o' wholesome dirt," and exhibited a head that Jim, the shoeblack-boy, told her was waiting for a bird to build in it! Poor Nelly tried to be as steady and careful as she could during her mother's absence, but she had not much notion of the way to set about it rightly; and as long as she could put on their thin cloaks and battered bonnets, she was not particular what was beneath.

The kind neighbour, at their request, procured a sprig of dingy holly from the butcher's shop round the corner for them. Then Nelly set to work very busily, by the dim light of a scrap of candle, and the berries, threaded and fastened up, were soon tied necklace-fashion on little Rosie's begrimed neck, who was as proud of them as the Empress of China of her state regalia. Rosie went off, and exhibited her finery in the admiring eyes of the neighbour's five children.

And then Nelly, knowing that her sister was quite safe, once more put on the ragged bonnet and threadbare cloak, and trotted out again into the streets, now bright with light; and as she wandered by the great plate-glass windows, glittering in the radiance of countless lamps and filled with every thing that was tempting and beautiful, her little lonely heart murmured—"This is Christmas Eve; and what is it to such poor people as we?" Then far better thoughts dawned on her, and she remembered her suffering mother on her bed of pain, and her longings for selfish pleasures faded away; and in the untaught neglected mind sprang up a confused tangle of better thoughts. She longed to have plenty of money. Alas! poor child!—her early training in the stern school of want had taught her in grim practical earnest that the only true fairy-wand in the world is money—hard, cold money!—hardly earned and hardly parted with! At this moment she paused, as her eyes fell on a glittering window ranged with all the wonderful world of toys that was laid open to rich child purchasers. It was pure fairy-land to her—a beautiful vision to be gazed at and dreamed of afterwards;—the lovely waxen babies, clad in flannel and silk—the miniature doll's house, with its tables, chairs, and pots and kettles! To children in another station these were all coveted things, to be obtained, most of them, through the mediation of kind grandmamas or aunts, or bought out of long-saved gift shillings; but to her, poor little thinly-clad child, who had never known the luxury of one copper coin to call *her own*! they gleamed and shone, a visible embodiment of the ideal beauty and grace of that childhood of which she knew only the rags and dirt.

As she stood gazing into the window, too far off in her ignorance even to look wistful, a plain dark-green carriage stopped at the door, and a lady alighted with a little girl. It was a cold night for any child to be out in, at that time; but poor Nelly was too much absorbed in the wonders before her to heed the warning numbness of her fingers and toes, and the little new-comer was wrapt in cloth and fur, and veiled thickly from the night air.

Nelly's reverie was abruptly broken by the displacing of the choicest doll in the window, which was mysteriously abstracted, as well as a huge doll-mansion, which, with its bright green door and brass knocker vanished into the interior of the shop, leaving a blank space through which Nelly could

now peep freely. She saw the little lady examine carefully into the interior economy of the doll's house, and supply several fancied requisites from a large box on the counter. All being satisfactorily finished, the great purchase was carried out and safely ensconced in the carriage, the little girl following her mother with the superb baby-doll in her arms. Nelly drew nearer to gaze longingly for the last time on that pretty waxen face and the delicate raiment, for to her was now lost the crowning charm of that brilliant window.

As the little lady stepped daintily out of the shop, a gentleman, passing hastily by, ran against her, and the precious doll was thrown on the muddy ground, which had been well saturated with passing showers. It was a terrible mischance, and everybody crowded round to sympathise with the disconsolate little owner—the author of the mischief being one of the most concerned.

"My dear," he said, "as I have been the unlucky cause of your doll's mishap, I must try and remedy the mischief. I don't know whether her personal hurts are beyond medical help; if not, her garments can be easily replaced by the doll milliner here!"

The little girl smiled through her troubles at the stranger's quaint words, and replied simply, "Oh, never mind! I dare say she is not hurt herself, and most of her clothes will wash or clean!"

"You are a very good-tempered little girl," replied the stranger, cordially, "to bear the accident so cheerfully. But as I unluckily upset Miss Dolly's balance, and gave her an unnecessary mud-bath, I hope your mamma will allow me to make a peace-offering to her in the shape of a warm mantle and hood to cover all her soiled finery?"

This, mamma would not hear of; politely assuring the stranger that her little daughter was not so silly as to make troubles of what could be easily remedied at home.

"At least," replied the gentleman, "pray allow me to inquire into Dolly's personal condition? I am a doctor, and can ascertain whether any serious injury has happened to her limbs, and the minor question of the garments can be settled afterwards."

The little girl laughingly assured him that she was sound and uninjured, even to her fair, curling hair, "though she has certainly dropped her bonnet," added she. A little dirty hand held up the missing article just at her elbow at this minute; and turning round, she beheld our poor Nelly, shy and shaking at her temerity, but ready to dare all in her deep admiration for the beautiful wax model baby she had admired so long.

"Oh, thank you!" said the little lady, merrily; "here it is, and mamma's maid will soon do up all her clothes for me, so that I shall be able to have her on Christmas Day, after all!"

"Thank you, my little girl!" interposed the lady, gently. "It was very good and careful of you to find it and bring it in to us; and as it is Christmas time, and you have rendered my daughter a service, I will give you something for a Christmas-box. Here is a half-crown for you—but you must first tell me how you will spend it. Shall you buy a doll, or something more useful?"

Poor Nelly! Her glistening eyes wandered over the gay shop and its assemblage of toys, the dolls and tea-sets, and all the rest of the tempting

things; and then she said, gravely, with a little sigh, "No, I'm afraid I oughtn't to. I should like a doll, and so would Rosie; but mother's in the hospital, and mayn't have much wittles for Christmas Day. I should like to get some tea and bread for her, and some plum-pudden for Rosie, and a pair of warm socks for her, and a shawl for mother; and then, perhaps—if there was a penny left—I might get a Dutch doll."

"But your half-crown will not buy all this," said the gentleman, who had been looking and listening, amused at the whole affair.

"Won't it, Sir?" said Nelly, staring with astonishment—for to her two shillings and sixpence, given to herself, seemed a perfect Golconda.

"No, indeed," said the lady, smiling; "but as you are such a thoughtful little girl, and seem to remember others before yourself, we will see what we can do." So saying, she put her young daughter into the warm carriage with all her toys, and told Nelly to follow her.

"May I take the liberty of stopping you one minute?" said the gentleman, bowing. "And as I doubt not your kindness will secure as much as possible of necessaries through the half-crown, will you allow me to add a doll for the little thing herself?"

The lady cheerfully consented; and Nelly was told to choose a doll among some selected for her, sensibly suited to her age and station—and she gazed in wondering admiration on the fair rosy cheeks and vacant blue orbs of the beautiful waxen figures before her. One that to her mind recalled her darling Rosie, reminded her of that spoiled little one, and she said, looking up awkwardly and shyly, "If you please, I would rather have a tea-set for Rosie and a Dutch doll for me!"

Her wishes were granted, by the present of a box of stout wooden tea-cups, and a large wooden painted doll, to which her kind-hearted friend added a twopenny hat with a long cock's feather to assist in the doll wardrobe. He then inquired into her family history, and gleaned from her incoherent rambling answers that her mother was at a hospital hard by, of which he was one of the surgeons.

"I will inquire into your mother's case, my little girl," said he; "and if I find she is a deserving woman, I dare say I can help her; at any rate I shall see her to-morrow, and can tell her all about you!"

"Oh, then, perhaps, Sir, you would take the pudding and the tea to her?" said thoughtless Nelly.

The doctor laughed outright. "No, my dear," he replied, "that would be somewhat against the rules of the hospital—her case might not admit of such fare. And the report I shall take of her loving little girl's remembrance of her will be as good as the best plum-pudding in the world to her, I do not doubt." But seeing the look of blank disappointment on Nelly's expressive face, he added, "If you like to send her a few simple biscuits, and this kind lady will allow you to lay out fourpence of her promised gift in this way, I will put them in my pocket for her, and give them to her as a Christmas-box from you!"

To Nelly's great joy the kind lady consented, and they all sallied out on their mission. At the draper's, next door, the lady purchased a pair of stout coarse socks for Rosie, and a warm shawl for mother, to which our friend the doctor added a comforter for Nelly herself.

"I hope," said he to the lady, "that at this general season of comfort

and home happiness, I may not seem rude and presumptuous in thrusting myself thus on your benevolent purpose, but Christmas time always does somehow interfere with ceremony."

"And quite rightly, so far," replied the lady, gently: "if we do not feel an interest in all human joys and sorrows then, the common link of Christianity which ought to bind us all together would seem to be of small avail!"

We have not space to follow Nelly and her kind friends to the grocer's for tea and sugar, and the baker's for bread and biscuits. Suffice it, that, the shopping ended, the kind lady wrote down their address in her note-book, and promised to call on them some day; and Nelly at last stood at their own door, weary and breathless, with her pinafore full of bread, tea and sugar, socks and shawl—all of which she had, by dint of immense ingenuity, prevented from popping through the holes in the aforesaid ragged garment. On the top of the heap, in the safest place, and feeding Nelly's nose by its mingled odour all the way home, lay a paper containing a couple of bountiful slices of cold boiled beef, and two huge hunches of cold pudding, the parting-gift of her friend the doctor.

And so, after all, Nelly enjoyed her Christmas Day; for, inspirited and emboldened by this bright prosperity, she actually accomplished the feat of washing Rosie and herself clean in all visible particulars, and in combing out the elf-locks into a semblance of decency. Then they put on their scanty garments and went to church and to school, unconsciously, in their poor little hungry hearts, putting a newer and brighter interpretation on the "good tidings of great joy," and feeling more closely related to their fellow-creatures of the rest of the world. So that, returning home, Rosie speculated quite cheerfully on the destinies of various handsome carriages full of merry well-clothed children; and Nelly remarked sagely, "And so you see, Rosie, all rich people are not so very wicked, though they do ride in carriages sometimes!"

And Rosie heartily agreed—with a mental eye to the beef and pudding. And what a feast these two children had! It would have done their kind friends' hearts good to have seen them—Rosie with the holly-berry necklace looking positively pretty on her clean neck, and Nelly with her comforter tied round her waist sash-wise in honour of the day.

The kind neighbour had lighted a very cozy little fire for them, and they set to work vigorously with a few stray scraps of evergreen they had picked up in the street, and decorated the room after their own queer fashion, making it look tolerably cheerful nevertheless; and in Nelly's heart the enjoyment and unusual comfort unconsciously awakened a spring of happiness, and thought for others, like a mountain rill once more supplied by the bountiful rain, that overflows its narrow boundary and feeds the freshening green young grass along its course. She searched out the poor half-starved cat, the common property of the numerous lodgers in the house, that fared ill enough on the collected scraps of all their joint scanty food, and generally roamed about wild and gaunt, a very wolf of grimalkins! But Christmas Day for once was to be a feast-day for her; so that, after her unwonted revel on the relics of the cold beef, Pussy actually purred herself to sleep before the fire! Then Nelly opened the window and scraped away the deep snow, spreading a plentiful store of crumbs for the sparrows.

The great event of dinner—and *such* a dinner!—being over, the two happy children took out their treasures of toys, and the rest of the day was passed in one endless Barmecide's feast in the wooden tea-things. Had it been real tea and literal cake consumed thus liberally, the consequences next day would have been terrible; but the nectar and ambrosia of fancy—the “making believe” of these visionary dainties—were too ethereal to be unwholesome. The doll, attired carefully in an old silk neck-kerchief for a dress, and crowned with the hat and cock's feather, bore no bad resemblance to her Majesty the Queen of the Cannibal Islands, whose court suit consists of a bonnet and a postage stamp! But in the children's eyes their first doll possessed all the charm of Baby No. 1 in a partial mother's imagination. Nelly and Rosie had never rung the changes through all the doll tribe of wood, wax, or leather, like richer children, and therefore experienced all the delightful wonder and admiration in their first freshness. The young princess whose wax baby is modelled from life, and robed in real lace and filmy cambric, has no special faculty of enjoyment beyond this.

When evening closed in, and the children, weary, for the first time, with a long day's enjoyment, went to their hard bed, the cherished doll (her finery laid aside) was attired in a newspaper night-gown, and tenderly hugged to sleep between them. And the delights of the day still mingled in their dreams in a sort of curious chaos of toys and feasts, dolls and plum puddings! What a world of hitherto unknown comforts and joys did these two poor little souls obtain from the chance bounty of a stranger, at the cost of a few shillings!

And the poor sick mother, on her hospital bed, cheered by her kind doctor's comforting words, and her children's thought of her, took such a turn for the better, that on New Year's Day she was sitting at home propped up in her chair, languidly combing out and plaiting poor Rosie's tangled mat, who did not appreciate the comfort much, any more than the wholesome bath administered vigorously by Nelly under the mother's superintendence.

And so the kind lady found them when she called that day—Rosie with a face shining like a looking-glass, and almost skinned with rubbing; and Nelly demurely sitting by the fire cobbling up a rent in her torn frock in what her mother called “dreadful gobble-stitches.” Heartfelt tears were in the poor, weak invalid's eyes, as she thanked her benevolent friend for all she had done, including the kind surgeon's name in her blessings.

“I assure you,” said the lady, smiling, “that my husband and I are thankful for the chance that brought us acquainted with Dr. Brown, and my little girl declares her doll is richer by a cloak and bonnet than she would otherwise have been.”

“And, oh!” said little Nelly, in a low voice, “I shall never forget *this* Christmas Day as long as I live!”



THE REPOSE OF NATURE.

BY THE REV. J. G. WOOD, M.A., F.L.S.



ONLY a few months ago the readers of THE ST. JAMES'S MAGAZINE took with me a "Summer's Walk through a Country Lane." The earth has since then accomplished nearly one half of its aerial course; and reader, author, and lane have traversed a space of some two hundred and seventy million miles, passed through the seasons of genial Summer, fruitful Autumn, and have commenced the cold Winter time, the

season of the earth's repose. Our beautiful trees, with their heavy masses of varied green, have changed gradually from bright emerald to dark olive, and passed through successive phases of redundant colouring that defy the artist's brush to imitate, until they have finally settled down into ruddy brown and sombre grey. The leaves have

fluttered one by one to the earth, which lies below waiting to receive their withered forms into her bosom, to transmute these effete particles into new forms of life and beauty, and to cause a future progeny of young and vigorous leafage to spring Phoenix-like from the funeral pyre of their ancestors, spontaneously raised under the shadow of their parental tree, fired by the hot beams of the summer sun, fanned by the breezes of spring, and quenched by the rains of autumn and the snows of winter.

Our hedges are bare and scanty, with the bright light shining through their denuded gaplets that so recently were veiled with rich verdure and blossoming flowers; our path is hard, sharp, and treacherous, and our feet likely to slip from the frozen pebbles and deposit us in the ditch, lately so full of flowers, but now containing a mixture of snow, water, dead thorn-branches at the bottom, and a few thistle-stems and nettle-leaves on the sides, that render such a locality a singularly unpleasant sojourn. Even our dear little pond is covered with ice, except where a few persevering ducks have swum so continually round a tiny circle that the water still bubbles through the icy covering, and where the cattle have still managed to break away the frozen surface in order to drink, thereby kneading the water into a kind of muddy paste, and covering the neighbouring ice with most unsightly brown splashes. Our little streamlet is dry, and the many creatures that disport themselves in its rippling waves have disappeared.

Gone are the insect tribes, whose busy hum gave such life to the scene; not even a beetle is to be seen taking a short stroll from one tree-root to another; hardly a bird has enough spirit to utter its lively chirrup, and the very robin himself, with his brown coat and red waistcoat, has gone off to the farmyards and houses, trusting to his insinuating ways, his sly boldness, and the irresistible compassion excited by his pitiful aspect as he sits outside the windows, with ruffled feathers, sunken head, and bright eye gleaming from the downy plumes. The cunning little fellow seems to feel that no one sitting in a warm room, at an abundantly spread table, can resist opening the window and giving a hearty welcome to the "ittle baird with boothom wed," as one of my child-friends is accustomed to call him. So the window is raised, and in comes the feathered mendicant, at first shy and fearful, keeping at a respectful distance, and picking up the crumbs that are thrown to him, with many a sidelong hop and great flirting of the wings.

Compassionate reader, if your premises should be invaded by a poor, cold, half-starved robin, do not feed him with bread-crumbs, but give him some little bits of fat meat cut in long and thin strips like small worms. Of course he will eat the crumbs provided he can get nothing better, but he requires the meat to supply his glowing frame with the capability of resisting the chilling frost. He will not forget your kindness, but day by day will make his appearance at your window, hop about your table, eat

out of your hand, and repay you with one of his own bright songs, which to my ears have the most charming mixture of mirth and melody.

There is, however, one drawback in his character. He is dreadfully jealous, and will not permit another bird to avail itself of the hospitality to which he has been indebted for his life, and has been known to kill in succession a whole series of unfortunate redbreasts that happened to trespass on the ground which he considered as his peculiar property.

Perhaps our lane is knee-deep in snow, and path, ditch, hedge, tree, and field, are alike clothed with one uniform mantle of shining white, glittering here and there as the cold sunbeams sparkle on the sharp snow-crystals that gleam like microscopic jewellery from every spray.

Where are all the busy, merry creatures that flitted among the branches, traversed the soil, or urged their course through the waters? Some, such as certain migratory birds, have flown to warmer regions, many have perished with the first frosts, having completed their earthly mission, while myriad others are still living in some recess, quiescent to all external appearance, but full of life and activity within, either sunk in that marvellous state of existence which seems really to be half-way between sleep and death, or undergoing a total change of being, in readiness for the ensuing spring.

We miss our little friend, the squirrel, from his accustomed haunts. No longer is he to be seen scudding about the grass in his own odd fashion, squatting upright with his feathery tail curled parasol-wise over his head, picking up a beech-nut with his fore-paws, nibbling at it critically, and then throwing it away and hopping after another. No longer can we amuse ourselves by rushing at him suddenly, and seeing him go leaping over the ground with his brush trailing behind him, and his body looking double its real length; watch him jump at the trunk of a tree, slip round the stem, scud up the branches, and then sit coolly on the topmost bough, and look down at us with benignant disdain.

Our little friend has gone to sleep for the winter, and if you know where to find his "cage," you may catch him asleep without much difficulty. Be it remembered, that he has two homes, a summer and a winter house; the former being lodged in the fork of some lofty branch, often near the end of a slight bough, and very conspicuous from below, and the latter warmly established close to the trunk of a goodly tree, sheltered from chilling winds by the large limbs against which it is placed, and defended from rain and storm by the well-thatched roof and warm lining.

Saughly coiled in this warm recess, the squirrel passes his winter, spending very many consecutive hours in that strange sleep which is called hibernation; awaking at intervals, when a gleam of warmer sunshine than usual rests upon his cage, running to his hidden treasury, taking a little refreshment, and then returning to his house to fall asleep again. He has an excellent memory, this little squirrel, and his faculties are not at all beclouded by the long hours of sleep; for as soon as he wakes he comes quietly out of his warm cottage, scrambles down the tree, runs to

one of the spots where he has laid up a store of food, scratches away until he has disclosed his treasure of nuts, takes as much as he needs, and returns to his home. Even when the snow lies thickly on the ground he is at no loss, but guided by some intuitive power, proceeds to the spot with unerring certainty, scrapes away the snow, and secures his meal.

The squirrel has a distant relation, a kind of third cousin once removed, well known under the title of dormouse, and often seen in cages, but not very frequently in a wild state. This little creature is also one of the hibernators, and has its warm nest in a thick bush, much as the squirrel has its domicile in a tree, where it sleeps its time away throughout the winter. Like the squirrel, too, it has its store of food, not gathered into the earth, but tucked away into sundry nooks and crannies in the neighbourhood. The amount of food which the dormouse takes during the winter, and the frequency of its awakening, depend almost entirely on the severity or mildness of the season. In a very sharp winter the drowsy creature wakes but seldom, and very little of its store is consumed, and indeed, even should the season be mild, the inroads on the larder are but few. The provisions are not gathered so much for the winter as for the first few weeks of spring, when the animal has at last shaken off its long wintry sleep, and returns to its own lively habits, nature not yet having supplied it with a sufficiency of food whereon to live.

The hedgehog, too, is another of our hibernating animals, coiling itself up in a warm nest in some hollow tree, or under the gnarled and projecting roots, and occasionally seeking a domicile in a deserted rabbit-burrow or disused fox-hole. All these three creatures may be found sleeping in their homes, and are thus easily captured.

As all these animals awake at intervals during the winter, and partake of nourishment, they are said to be partial hibernators, the best British examples of perfect hibernation being exhibited by those singular winged quadrupeds which we call bats.

If in winter we explore the recesses of almost any hollow tree, any dark crevice in the rocks, or any old deserted building, there we shall find, hanging by their hind legs or gathered closely into thick clusters, some bats, sunk in the deepest lethargy, and giving but slight indications of life. All through the winter hang the bats, with scarcely a movement of head or limb, and, unlike the preceding animals, they never awake to seek nourishment, as there would be none for them.

There seems to be no creature which spends so much of its time in sleep as the bat. Not only does it lie dormant throughout the winter, but it passes daily into that strange state of drowsiness which is more than sleep, though not quite so deep as in winter.

It is a popular, but very erroneous notion, that this torpor is caused by cold. Now, if this were the case, the hibernating animals would place themselves in some cold and exposed spot, where they would be influenced by the increasing chill of the weather. But it is found, after a long course

of experiments, including a most valuable series by Dr. Marshall Hall, that the effect of cold upon a hibernating animal is twofold; it first awakes the creature from slumber, and then kills it.

During the time of its slumbers the extreme torpidity of the vital organs is most curious, while the external portions seem to acquire a proportionate irritability, a phenomenon which is partially seen even in ourselves during ordinary sleep. If, for example, a hedgehog while in the torpid state be touched, it partially uncoils, gives a peculiar deep grunt, and again curls itself up. The bat, if touched while in this strange sleep, will wriggle about like an injured worm, while the very same touch would have no perceptible effect upon it when awake. Indeed, the hibernating creature seems to pass, for a time, into a lower state of being, as far as its mere animal characteristics are concerned; and the bat, the highest of our British mammals, becomes scarcely higher in its organization than a toad or a frog.

Instead of keeping up a high temperature, as is the case while it is awake, it actually becomes colder than many cold-blooded animals; the temperature of the body exactly following that of the surrounding atmosphere, the heat of the surface being about half a degree higher, and that of the vital organs about three degrees; so that when a thermometer hanging beside the animal marked a temperature of thirty-six degrees, one whose bulb was within the stomach only marked thirty-nine. A similar phenomenon was observed by Dr. Jenner with a hedgehog, when the internal temperature was a little over three degrees above that of the air.

The reader must bear in mind that experiments of this nature require the very greatest care, for the hibernating state is of so delicate a nature, and so easily disturbed, that a heedless footstep on the floor will awaken the creature, set it breathing, and increase the temperature some twenty degrees in a minute or two.

During the true hibernation the breath is almost entirely suspended. Bats while sleeping have been gently immersed in water kept carefully at the same temperature as their bodies, have been sunk below the surface for a space of sixteen minutes, and found to be none the worse for their bath. A hedgehog has been subjected to the same test for more than twenty minutes, and although it moved slightly under water, and expelled a little air from its lungs, it was not at all injured by the experiment.

Hibernating animals have also been placed in carbonic acid gas for a space of several hours, without suffering from its effects, while rats and sparrows placed in the same gas fell lifeless to the bottom of the vessel and did not recover.

In order to ascertain with accuracy the rate of respiration and pulsation during this curious state, a hibernating bat was placed in an ingenious instrument which measures the quantity of air consumed by the creature contained within it. After remaining twenty-four hours in this machine, scientifically termed a pneumatometer, the index gave no sign. The

animal was then slightly disturbed, and in the space of nearly three hours consumed about one cubic inch of oxygen. But when more disturbed, and forced to move briskly, it consumed five cubic inches in one hour.

Although the respiration is thus checked, and the lungs cease their labours, the heart continues to pulsate, though slowly, making less than thirty beats in a minute. So we have a most curious phenomenon, *i. e.* blood constantly circulating through the system without any respiration to renew its vitality, and without even the reservoirs of air which are possessed by the reptiles.

The reason of the long hibernation of the bats is evident. They feed wholly on insects, which likewise disappear during the winter months; and if there were no means of reducing the bodily functions to the lowest ebb compatible with the retention of life within the frame, the whole race of insect-eating bats would be swept off the earth in a single winter.

It is sufficiently remarkable that the animals which hibernate on account of the absence of food should belong to the two extremes of the vertebrate kingdom. The squirrel and dormouse might lay up a store so large as to afford an abundant supply throughout the whole winter; but the bat, feeding only on animal substances, could not do so, and would starve but for the merciful torpor in which it is sunk for so long a time. For precisely the same reason, our British reptiles retire during the cold months of the year into some deep recess, and there remain torpid until the succeeding spring brings with it the needful warmth and food.

Take, for example, two of our best-known reptiles, the frog and the snake, both of which disappear during winter for much the same reason. The frog lives mostly on insects, which all vanish in the winter months for want of their vegetable food; and the snake also retires to winter quarters because it lives mostly on frogs, which have hidden themselves until the spring. Both these creatures, in common with many other reptiles, burrow deeply in the earth or seek some snug recess as soon as the autumn draws to a close, and safe in their homes, sink to sleep until the sunbeams recover their warmth, again enliven the earth with verdure, and the annual resurrection of the vegetable world has been accomplished.

Then the renewal of that process takes place. The plants put forth their tender shoots, the leaf-eating insects come from their winter quarters to eat the leaves, the frogs emerge from the ground to eat the insects, and the snakes glide out to eat the frogs. Such reptiles as the blind-worm, which feed not upon frogs, but live on insects, slugs, and such-like creatures, are earlier than the snakes, because they find their food ready for them. Truly is it said, "The eyes of all wait upon Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them their meat in due season. Thou openest Thine hand, and fillest all things living with plenteousness."

Strange discoveries are sometimes made in the course of gardening operations, if people will only use their eyes. A few years ago, while some workmen were pecking up the gravel in a playground belonging to

a school at Oxford, preparatory to making certain alterations, they came on a little colony of frogs, about seven or eight inches below the surface, all sitting packed closely together, and all with their noses pointing to the surface. How long they had been in that situation I could not discover; but by comparing one circumstance with another, I came to the conclusion that the frogs had settled themselves down for their winter's slumber about two years previous to their disinterment, been covered with gravel when the playground was laid down, and had remained there perforce ever since. They were so firmly imbedded in the earth that they could not stir a limb, and must have depended wholly for respiration and subsistence on the small modicum of atmosphere and the very few insects that might make their way through the minute crevices which exist in all soil. In general, the winter's retreat of the frog is in the muddy soil at the bottom of some pool or ditch, where they congregate closely together in masses, and remain without need of food or respiration until the spring.

In 1857, I was walking in the grounds of a gentleman living near Oxford, who was making considerable alterations in his domains. Observing a cavity rather curiously hollowed in a bank that was evidently being broken down for removal, I asked a man who was working near at hand if he knew the cause of so odd a piece of work. He told me that on the previous day he was cutting down the bank, when he came upon several large stones, and on removing them, he found a whole mass of snakes, tightly coiled up together, and closely filling the cavity in which they lay.

The hollow was about three feet from the surface of the ground, and, as far as I could make out from the aspect of the spot and the *débris* left by the workmen, must have been about four or five feet from the face of the bank. I could not ascertain whether any aperture was visible, or any channel of communication between the hole where the snakes were found and the open air. The man, of course, thought they were vipers, agreeably to the invariable tendency of the rustic mind, which dreads the newt and the lizard, which are totally harmless, more than the viper, which really possesses a terrible store of poisoned weapons, and attributes to the bright and innocuous dragon-flies a sting worse than that of the wasp and hornet.

It has been already mentioned that a very great proportion of the insect tribes which buzzed and hummed so merrily during our summer walk, have died after providing for a numerous progeny. Such is indeed the case; but there are many insects which are in full life, though at present in a state of partial torpidity, as is needful while the frozen ground and withered foliage afford them no sustenance.

There are the bees, for example, all snugly asleep in their hive, having contrived to keep up a sufficient warmth for their winter's needs, and laid up a sufficient store of honey for the little nourishment which they require. If you could look into their hives, you would see the bees closely

clustered together, and every unsealed cell containing a bee that has crept half-way into it, and there lies comfortably sleeping. That cold is injurious you can easily prove by gently tapping the hive, when a little commotion is heard within, a bee comes out to see what is the matter, and immediately falls dead from the frosty atmosphere. Only do not repeat this process, unless you desire to lose all the bees—for when these insects awake they must eat, and unless they are kept perfectly quiet they will rapidly consume their store, and then die miserably of cold and hunger.

A few wasps, too, and other insects, may be found in banks or similar localities, there awaiting the spring, which will set them at liberty to initiate new households and multiply their species in a marvellously rapid manner. The ant tribe too are patiently resting in their subterranean beds, and will be among the first to arise in the Spring.

Few persons have any idea, as they walk in the country on a winter day, how the ground beneath their feet is teeming with life. Putting aside the earth-worms, and such creatures as have their normal existence below the soil, we will just look for ourselves, and try to discover a few of the hidden wonders of this most wonderful earth.

Let us come to the feet of these elm and oak trees that are planted on the bank of our lane, clear away the snow, and begin to dig. In this sharp frosty weather, we shall need the aid of a pickaxe or some such weapon to pierce the frozen soil, but after the first few strokes, a trowel, or even a pocket-knife, will answer tolerably well.

The best way to dig for insects is to peck up a circular patch about eighteen inches in diameter, throw aside the frozen clods, and then to work carefully downwards, so as to form a conical depression in the soil. We shall hardly have dug four or five inches in depth when we shall come to our hidden friends. A big cocktail beetle is suddenly dislodged, rolls black and bewildered to the bottom of the hole, picks himself up again, runs at the supposed foe with open jaws, and defiant tail curled scorpion-wise over his sooty back—falters, stops, runs on again, but slowly, as if paralyzed—stops again, staggers, falls over and rolls back dead. He has been killed by the frost, because he was roused suddenly from his torpor.

Two or three more beetles of different species come tumbling out, and all meet the same fate, though not so dauntlessly as the cocktail. Presently we toss out, together with the mould, a brown spindle-shaped object, blunt at one end, sharply pointed at the other, and boldly ringed for half its length. This is the pupa, or chrysalis, of some large moth, and while removing it we lay our hands on one of the great mysteries of this world—a mystery, which, if rightly explained, would give the clue to many a bright truth now hidden within labyrinthian doubts and mazy theories.

At the very outset we are met with a paradox. The frost killed the beetle that came from precisely the same locality, and, of course, we might argue that this creature would also die from sudden exposure to the

cold atmosphere. Nothing of the kind. Provided we do not handle it roughly, we may take it home, put it in a box, and in due time be rewarded by seeing a grand wide-winged moth emerge from the dull case in which it had so long lain, having suffered no injury from its unexpected change of residence. The more we dig, the greater number of living insects and pupæ shall we find, the former soon dying from the sudden cold, and the latter suffering no apparent inconvenience.

Here we have a totally different branch of the subject. What manner of state is this in which the chrysalis apparently reposes? It is not sleep, neither is it hibernation, but something quite distinct from both, and yet having a certain analogy to both. It is not death, for the creature still lives, and yet it is a kind of death to the caterpillar, which lately traversed the branches and fed on the green leaves, before it descended to a grave beneath the tree on which it had lived. It is not repose, for the vital powers are acting with wondrous force, vehemence, and rapidity, transmuting the heavy green caterpillar into the airy-winged moth, or rather evolving the one from the other, through the medium of the intermediate form which now lies dull, helpless, and apparently dead in our hands. Mystery of mysteries, all is mystery—unexplained, though perhaps not inexplicable—fraught, let us be sure, with wondrous meanings, and waiting until He who poured them from His all-creative being shall interpret their hidden prophecies!

We have called this article the Repose of Nature, from want of a better word; but in truth, there is no absolute repose in nature. All nature rebels against it, and the powers of nature never cease from their labours. "My Father works," said the Lord, "and I work;" and this is the law of the universe, operating on all created things alike. I fancy that there is nothing so abhorrent to the Great Worker as idleness—the pioneer of all picking and stealing, evil speaking, lying, and slandering. There is something within us which forces us to acknowledge the majesty of work; and the idlest man living can but feel an involuntary respect for the poorest industrious labourer who has died at his work, and a pang of remorse at the contrast to his own useless life.

All workers know, that the truest rest is a change of occupation, and that to be condemned to utter idleness would be the most terrible punishment that could be inflicted upon a human being. Why, even the poor fashionable idler really works, in his way, as hard as any of us, because getting amusement is much more laborious than getting a living, becomes more difficult every day, and leaves nothing but disappointment behind it. Idle people are fond of talking as if they had exhausted the world, and found it to be hollow and empty—like that poor silly man, of whom we read the other day in the papers, who shot himself because he had been all over this world and thought it was time for him to try another. Why, there is a sliver of a cedar-pencil lying on my paper, and I will answer for it that any "used up" personage who thinks that he has exhausted the

world and will just try to find out all about that little slip of juniper wood will find life too short for the task.

Look, for example, at the amount of work which is achieved within this chrysalis lying before us, and just think of the millions upon millions of similar beings at this moment undergoing as complete a transformation, from a terrestrial to an aerial state of existence; their form, constitution, organization, wants and habits, so totally changed that the one is wholly unrecognizable from the other. Even to go back for a moment to our old friend, the frog, what a wonderful law it is which takes possession of the no-limbed, long-tailed, gill-breathing tadpole, and changes it into a four-legged, leaping, air-breathing animal, without even a vestige of tail!

I know few pursuits more absorbingly interesting than tracing the gradual change of a larva or caterpillar while passing through its various states until it attains its perfected form, from which it never after varies. It is an easy task enough, and may be accomplished by any one who has, or who chooses to acquire, a steady hand and a tolerable eye. Take any common caterpillars of rather large size—silkworms will answer the purpose well, and can easily be obtained—put two or three into proof spirits, and let the others change into their pupil form. Note the day that they change, and put a few into spirits within an hour after their casting off their caterpillar skin. Keep the rest, and every two days put a couple into spirits until the moths appear from the survivors, and then treat them after the same fashion. You will then have a really valuable series of objects, which by careful dissection under water or spirits will unveil some great mysteries. It is needful that the very early pupæ should be kept in the spirits for some weeks before dissection, as their interior is so soft as to be little but a milky fluid, and requires hardening with the spirits before it can safely be touched.

It is most wonderful to see the gradual development of the process by which a moth or butterfly is evolved from the caterpillar; the leaf-eating creature with its powerful jaws and huge stomach becoming a honey-sucker, with the most delicate digestive organs imaginable; the creeping thing changed into a winged being; the nearly blind grub into a creature with eyes of wonderful complexity; and the whole form of body, muscular system, nerves, and internal structure, being totally changed to suit the altered condition in which the remainder of its life will be spent.

Take, for example, the chrysalis which we have just dug out of the ground, and suppose the brown outer skin to be transparent while the process of evolvment is going on. During its caterpillar state nearly the whole of its body is filled with a huge stomach, extending throughout the greater part of its length, and tightly filled with food, as is likely in a creature that is always eating. The skin, which, to the mass of spectators, seems to contain nothing but a soft pulp, is lined with an array of flat and white muscles, and the whole space between these muscles and the stomach is filled up with fat, formed into rather hard lumps of variable

dimensions, and penetrated with the breathing tubes, and some very slight nerves. Along the abdomen, and just below the skin, runs a chain of little knots of nerve-like substance, connected together with double cords of similar material; and along the back lies a chain of valves, which is analogous to the heart of the higher animals.

Throughout the transformation, the digestive, nervous, and circulating systems retain their relative positions, but are greatly altered in relative size and importance. The digestive organs are reduced to a tithe of their former volume, the masses of loose fat gradually shrink, while new members begin to make their appearance, and increase imperceptibly from day to day, gaining form and substance by the slow but Divine and irresistible power which is equally exerted in creating an universe or moulding a moth's plumage.

Mine ancient and constant enemy, lack of space, here warns me that we shall not be able to examine the whole structure of the future moth, and we will therefore restrict ourselves to the most obvious points of difference between the caterpillar and the perfect insect, namely, the wings. Under the skin of the back (and these can be seen even in the caterpillar) are two little projections, white, soft, and in shape not unlike the two halves of a pea, but rather flatter. On raising them with a needle it is found that each separates into two portions; and, on further examination, we find they are the latent wings in their unformed condition.

It seems incredible that within this little space should be packed the beautiful wings which, when spread, will contain several square inches of firm and strong membrane, penetrated by air-cells, strengthened by nervures, and clothed with myriads upon myriads of delicately carved scales. Yet it is the fact; and, when the creature emerges from its case, we shall see how the wings attain their full size.

When the moth leaves the chrysalis state, it crawls up some perpendicular object, generally the native tree on which it has lived, and at whose foot it has burrowed. It then takes several long and deep inspirations, which have a perceptible effect in shaking out, as it were, the hair-like plumage of the body, and causing it to assume a brighter tint. It next slightly opens the wings, which are still thick and solid, and totally useless for flight, and communicates to them a rapid tremulous motion, every now and then pausing to take a few deep breaths. As it proceeds with this task, fold after fold is gently shaken and smoothed out, each breath driving the air through the tubes, which permeate every part of the wings, and so strengthening these members by regular degrees, until at last they stand out in all their beauty—firm, strong, and pointed, and covered with a gorgeous blazonry that never herald (except the herald moth) ended.

Touch with a camel's-hair brush any part of the wing so as to remove a few scales, dab the brush on a slip of glass, put it under the microscope, and then see how each particle of the almost imperceptible and impalpable coloured dust which clothes the wings

becomes manifest as an elegantly formed scale, sculptured with designs of singular beauty and regularity, formed of at least two, if not three, separate membranes, and waved, toothed, or fringed at the extremity, according to its position on the wing. Just consider how many hundreds of thousands of these scales are needed to cover a surface so great, and the inconceivable care which is required, not only in making them, but in setting them in rows more regular than the slates on a house-top, each over-lapping the other, and arranged so as to defend the delicate membrane of the wing from moisture. You cannot wet a moth's wing with water, for it runs off in drops as if the wings were covered with oil.

When were these scales made, and how were they fashioned? No naturalist can give an answer, save that they exist by the will of the Divine author. Truly it is worth while to reflect upon the constant and elaborate providential care which is required to form the wing of a moth in so short a time, and to think what laborious tasks are being elaborated in the earth beneath our feet, while we superficially think that nature is reposing. Not even the trees are reposing, although their branches wave, black and deathlike, against the sky. They are silently but laboriously concentrating their forces, settling the spots whence new leaves and branches are to spring, driving fresh rootlets through the soil, in order to gather from its various elements those particles which will be needed to carry on the work of increase, and preparing themselves with the instinctive foresight of the vegetable kingdom for the labours of the ensuing year.

Even in so-called inorganic particles there is no absolute repose; for the chemist can detect in each grain of sand below our feet, in each tiny mite that dances and sparkles in the sunbeams, an array of mighty forces acting together, and uniting for the time to preserve the object in the form which it at present holds, but liable to be set free in a thousand different ways, and then diverging upon their various missions to do the will of the All-Worker.

He never slumbers nor sleeps; and hence it follows, that as all existences proceed from Him, as all created things begin and end in Him, all things must necessarily be imbued with the spirit of eternal and ceaseless labour; and, though they may for a while rest from their labours—and their works do follow them—can never suffer stagnation, and much less be annihilated. Each material particle which assists in the constitution or the functions of our mortal bodies brooks not stagnation for an instant, but with a curious and evident analogy, passes from death to life, and becomes etherealized into its most rarefied and gaseous forms, another being, and yet the same!

A COMMON STORY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

"She loves with love that cannot tire:
 And if, ah woe! she loves alone,
 Through passionate duty love flames higher,
 As grass grows taller round a stone."

—COVENTRY PATMORE.

So, the truth 's out. I'll grasp it like a snake,—
 It will not slay me. My heart shall not break
 Awhile, if only for the children's sake.

For his too, somewhat. Let him stand unblamed;
 None say, he gave me less than honour claimed,
 Except—one trifle scarcely worth being named—

The heart. That 's gone. The corrupt dead might be
 As easily raised up, breathing—fair to see,
 As he could bring his whole heart back to me.

I never sought him in coquettish sport,
 Or courted him as silly maidens court,
 And wonder when the longed-for prize falls short.

I only loved him—any woman would:
 But shut my love up till he came and sued,
 Then poured it o'er his dry life like a flood.

I was so happy I could make him blest!
 So happy that I was his first and best,
 As he mine—when he took me to his breast.

Ah me! if only then he had been true!
 If for one little year, a month or two,
 He had given me love for love, as was my due!

Or had he told me, ere the deed was done,
 He only raised me to his heart's dear throne—
 Poor substitute!—because the queen was gone!

Oh, had he whispered when his sweetest kiss
 Was warm upon my mouth in fancied bliss,
 He had kissed another woman like to this,—

It were less bitter! Sometimes I could weep
 To be so cheated, like a child asleep:—
 Were not the anguish far too dry and deep.

So I built my house upon another's ground;
 Mocked with a heart just caught at the rebound—
 A cankered thing that looked so firm and sound.

And when that heart grew colder—colder still,
I, ignorant, tried all duties to fulfil,
Blaming my foolish pain, exacting will,

All—anything but him. It was to be :
The full draught others drink up carelessly
Was made this bitter Tantalus-cup for me.

I say again—he gives me all I claimed,
I and my children never shall be shamed :
He is a just man—he will live unblamed.

Only—O God, O God, to cry for bread,
And get a stone! Daily to lay my head
Upon a bosom where the old love's dead!

Dead?—Fool! It never lived. It only stirred
Galvanic, like an hour-cold corpse. None heard :
So let me bury it without a word.

He'll keep that other woman from my sight.
I know not if her face be foul or bright ;
I only know that it was his delight—

As his was mine : I only know he stands
Pale, at the touch of their long-severed hands,
Then to a flickering smile his lips commands,

Lest I should grieve, or jealous anger show.
He need not. When the ship's gone down, I trow,
We little reck whatever wind may blow.

And so my silent moan begins and ends.
No world's laugh or world's taunt, no pity of friends
Or sneer of foes, with this my torment blends.

None knows—none heeds. I have a little pride ;
Enough to stand up, wife-like, by his side,
With the same smile as when I was a bride.

And I shall take his children to my arms ;
They will not miss these fading, worthless charms ;
Their kiss—ah! unlike his—all pain disarms.

And haply, as the solemn years go by,
He will think sometimes with regretful sigh,
The other woman was less true than I.

CAN WRONG BE RIGHT?

A TALE.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

XXV.

It is impossible to create an interest in the progress of a disease such as that which had afflicted us; it is simply loathsome and dangerous. As long as my reason remained, my anxiety was for my child. The benevolent lady, Mrs. Dunbar, whom I mentioned to you, was as a ministering angel by my side night and day; and I know that to her care and watching I owe my life. Immediately before my mind gave way, I was impressed with an idea that I was dying, and saw clearly, that, in the event of my death, all record of who my child really was would be obliterated. I could not see what I wrote—yet I did write a few words that explained all, directed them to my husband, and enclosed them in half a sheet of paper, which Mrs. Dunbar sealed, promising not to open it except in the event of my death—and then only to have it safely delivered as addressed. After this came a long insensibility to all around me: my first consciousness was hearing my child singing some air in his usual “ta-ta” way. I listened with sealed eyes—but I could not be deceived; the voice had the ringing music of health in its tones.

I did, indeed, thank God that he was well, and that I was spared; but I had quite enough of the woman in me to feel anxious about my appearance. “The small-pox” had been the terror of my life. When assured by Mrs. Dunbar that my boy was safe, that he had had the disease favourably, was not in the least “marked,” and that his eyes were clear as ever, I asked a leading question as to my own future. I was told to be thankful; my life, and, she now hoped, my eye-sight, were safe. All this was great cause of gratitude.

The disease had, indeed, poured out the vial of its wrath on my devoted head. When able to see, my self-constituted nurse refused me the looking-glass I craved for—she knew I could not bear it yet. When I did seek myself on its bright surface, the once Mildred Kennett could no where be discovered. The enlarged, spotted features!—But, enough. You know I bear the marks on my cheeks and brow to this day; imagine what it was when I could in no way recognize myself—imagine what it was when my child screamed, and lisped that was “not mamma!” and you will comprehend the agony I endured. Not only was my beauty gone, but I had lost every trace of my identity.

Until then I had believed myself free from personal vanity. Even before my grandmother was recommended by the imperious Lady

Harvey to "sear my face with a red hot iron," I knew that I was considered a village beauty. I believed it when a girl. My grandmother, wisely, had never made fuss or concealment about it. It was a fact, as much so as the beauty of a tree—the warmth of sunshine. It pleased people to look at me—I saw it in their faces, and was glad! There had been times when even Sir Oswald recognized it with approval; and at Rome, where it had been the poet's and painter's theme, I saw it gave him pleasure. I could not tell to what future I looked forward; but beauty is a woman's stronghold during the earlier portion of her life, and she struggles hard, and it may be foolishly, to keep it.

Much, it is true, of what is wasted in her battle with Time would secure to her, if properly employed, a firmer hold on the affections of the man she loves—whose objects will change quite as much as her beauty; the lover merges insensibly into the husband, who requires a different sort of companionship to keep what has been won. Then comes the father's anxieties for his children, calling forth a new existence in the woman; and the dear word "Mother" is added to the earlier but not more cherished ones of bride and wife. A woman may honestly seek to preserve her beauty while discharging her duties; but she must not hope the husband values it as he did, though he may estimate her better and more.

My child for some time would not go near me, but screamed violently if I attempted to touch him. At last I began singing one of his favourite airs. He drew closer and closer—put up his little hands to stroke my face, passing them gently over the scarlet ridges—murmured "Poor mamma—not pretty mamma—poor mamma!" and held up his blooming mouth to kiss my still swollen lips.

Oh, my woman's vanity! What anguish it was to feel that HE could never remember me as I was. "Poor mamma—NOT pretty—poor mamma!"

The conviction that charm after charm is passing is a greater trial to a fading woman than she will admit; but the effect, if sure, is slow; and as the once Beauty passes carefully over Time's stepping-stones, she derives consolation from the knowledge that there are those pressing onward like herself, to whom she is very dear, and others who ward off the approach of age, as an enemy, from her, lest they should be robbed of a cherished treasure; and so she gets on, between hopes and fears, until fairly shrouded by old age. Of course, this is only a source of very partial regret to high-souled, noble women, who progress, with triumphal march, through the present to the New Kingdom, and have had a lofty end in view from their earlier days. But I lost suddenly by this frightful attack what, in the ordinary course of time, it would have taken many years to destroy.

Mrs. Stanley declared she was beaten from her plans by the small pox—not by any failure of her "system." She could not ask parents to send their children to her school, "the nest of such an infection," for months to come. "She was so grieved—so sorry." I saw that she could not bear to look at me, but spoke with averted eyes. She had given Mr.

Stanley notice that he was to go abroad with her for a few months ; he was very useful, she said, in seeing after the children. "If Mr. Stanley did not go, she must take a second governess."

I found I must seek another home. The school was to be metamorphosed into an aviary for acclimatizing foreign singing-birds, which, after a time, were to be turned into the plantations, and give our English songsters some fresh ideas of sound. Mrs. Dunbar offered me a home in her cottage. "I could work there," she said; "and no doubt, when the season came round, I should find my friend the milliner ready to supply me with data to work from; I was then unequal to any exertion." I can hardly tell why, but I was haunted by a dread that during my delirium I had betrayed at least a portion of my history to Mrs. Dunbar. Her nature was so conscientious, that, at almost any peril, those whom she knew to be going wrong she *must* endeavour to set right; and every now and then she threw out little hints that the means should sanctify the end, and that it was an anti-Christian fallacy to talk of the end sanctifying the means. She loved to say—"We must not do ill that grace may abound." She did not like my boy to play with the village children. I sometimes perceived her eyes fixed on me with an expression of such mingled pity and anxiety, that I longed to question her, and yet dared not. The doctor had still forbidden me to sit in unshaded light, or to use my eyes at all—he considered my life preserved as by a miracle, as some species of fever succeeded the fever of the disease that had ploughed my poor face with its iron coulter.

The Stanleys were gone; but to the last Mrs. Stanley treated me with consideration, and assured me she hoped to re-establish her system on her return. The smith's wife and her adherents quietly continued their children as pupils at the parish school, and nothing more was said about the chapel.

My good friend's activity could find no safety-valve beyond visiting the regular cottage invalids—as the small pox, having exhausted its rage, left the village healthy and tranquil. My boy's enjoyment was music—he would sit for hours at the piano in the now-deserted schoolroom, no matter how cold it was, and resist removal. This had grown on me, and I could not understand why Mrs. Dunbar was anxious on the subject—such a superb, healthy little fellow, as he was! But it was his extreme wilfulness, I soon discovered, that caused my friend so much trouble—he was such a determined boy that I could not manage him.

I remember confessing to that good woman how completely the child mastered the woman. "You gave him his own way in infancy," said my friend, "as many mothers do, under the vain belief that the baby is too young to comprehend his power. This is a popular fallacy. The infant's eye soon distinguishes between jest and earnest; his will now is stronger than yours; yours is strong in patience, in perseverance; in love, certainly—in duty, perhaps; but his is strong for CONQUEST. He is

exactly the boy who requires a father—under your management he will be ruined.”

You can imagine how I writhed under these truths, and knelt helplessly beside him while he slept, praying his pardon for the injury I had done him, and entreating God, in His mercy, to find some way of escape for us both.

My spirit was still very unchastened. I was impatient of this forced life of inactivity. Even when the doctor said it was time that I took exercise, I shrouded my face beneath a double veil of crape, that no breath of air could penetrate without bearing that peculiar aroma of blackness which those who wear crape know so well. I had no means of obtaining intelligence of Sir Oswald's movements. How could I go to Mrs. Clary, or see any one? This thought, recurring so often, drove me more than half distracted. I wept, and wept, like a foolish woman as I was. I imagined a thousand phantoms, each of them worse than the realities of my convent life. I believe that at times I was almost unkind to my child, and in my wickedness faulted Mrs. Dunbar's lovingness towards him, feeling as if her sweet, gentle face took away his affection from me—while I believed he still turned from me in disgust. I resolved as it were, to shut out all hope. Mrs. Dunbar's patience irritated me more and more: only a God-taught woman could endure as she did. One night my thoughts had been seething through my brain more painfully than ever—sleep was impossible; at last I wrapped myself in my shawl, and, deserting my bed, sat pressing my fevered brow against the glass of the window, when, suddenly, a light seemed to shine into my whole nature! I fell on my knees in the sunshine of a hope, so bright, that I felt my heart beat tumultuously, and a prayer of gratitude poured from my lips. How was it that I had never thought this thought before? Such healing as it brought on its wings, soothing and comforting me beyond conception! I longed for daylight; yet lay down calmly and gratefully, and slept soundly until the day was far advanced.

I awoke a different creature. My child was already up and dressed, and I had never heard him move: the little fellow was breakfasting when I entered the parlour. I had always chosen the darkest corner of the room to sit in; now I boldly faced the light and my hostess—kissed my child cheerfully, so that, placing his little arms round my neck, he drew down my head to be kissed again. And when breakfast was over, Mrs. Dunbar had folded her hands in the silent thankfulness that was her habit. Looking at her steadily, I said—

“I know you to be entirely incapable of dissimulation; look at me, and tell me truly, if, in what I am, you could in any way recognize what I was? Tell me!”

“I really wish you would not ask a question which it would give me much pain to answer. In the course of a few months, perhaps,——”

“No; I do not yet want to hear what may happen with time,” I

replied; "I want from my good and faithful friend—my gentle and kind nurse—a direct answer. Could you recognize, in what I am, what I was?"

"No, I certainly could not; but——"

"Is it possible that I shall ever be like my former self?"

"I fear not; the redness will, of course, fade, and those seams soften: your eyes are really unchanged."

"Except in the setting, my friend: the long lashes are gone."

"They are returning; and your smile—for this is the first time I have seen you smile since your illness—is, as it has——" She paused, and then added—"May God give you strength to bear the truth, my poor girl! but were those nearest and dearest to you in the world, who had not seen you for six months, to meet you now, they certainly would not know you."

She was quite unprepared for the emotion—certainly not one of sorrow, with which I cast myself on her bosom, and ejaculated, "Thank God!" again and again.

She held me from her after a few minutes, and then said—

"The time may come when you will tell me what this means. I do not now ask you to do so; it is the duty of a friend to respect silence, and I can have faith, without the aid of words, in your honour." She kissed my poor, seamed brow, as if it had been clear as alabaster, and on my knees I blessed her for the noble reliance she placed in me.

The iron shaft was drawn from my heart, and the wound healed; a new path was laid out for me, and a new door opened. I could meet my husband face to face, and he would not know me! I could be near him without fear of detection: I might even minister to him,—who could tell? My appearance could excite no emotion in HER jealous mind. Where they went, I could follow! My boy might attract HIS attention. Who could look on him without admiration? my glorious, beautiful boy! How thankful I was that he had escaped the brand of the Destroyer—how grateful, that my face had been masked so effectually! I might return to my native village—might weep beside my father's grave, and invoke the spirit-blessing of my dear grandmother in her own chamber—might wander in the woods of Brecken!—might kneel within the church where my husband worshipped, unknown, unrecognized, uncared for, except as a stranger! Oh, blessed mask! How I rejoiced in the concealment thus promised to me!

XXVI.

HAD I acted in accordance with my desires, I would have left my child under Mrs. Dunbar's care, and at once found my way to Brecken. No regret for my lost beauty mingled with the delightful sensation of liberty that bounded through my veins in rapid currents, and beat in every pulse; it was such a new feeling, that I was altogether a different

creature. Mrs. Dunbar smiled quietly, as if she thought what a powerful motive must exist to make a young woman rejoice in the total wreck of her good looks—but I smiled, in return, “No one could recognize me.” It was only sometimes, when I looked in the glass, that a throb of womanly anguish amounted for the moment to suffocation; but it quickly passed away, when I whispered to myself that such was the price of my freedom. As yet, however, I must not venture out of the neighbourhood—my scars were still so recent that people would fear infection; but I was freed from restraint. I walked out fearlessly. I did not tremble at the roll of carriage-wheels, nor shrink from meeting the wayside stranger. I should not be recognized anywhere—I could look in the face him for whom I had sacrificed everything, and he “would not know me.”

My hands were too valuable for Mrs. Clary to leave them long unemployed, and when able to receive it, I had no lack of work. She came down herself with some mysterious matters of great importance, and mourned over my “state” most pathetically. I asked her if she still wished me to take the position she had offered me in her show-room, and was greatly amused at her look of horror. Then she said, “It was my own fault I had not at once accepted the situation—I should then have escaped infection, and who knows what might have happened?” That dim prying into the future, and drawing conclusions from its indistinctness, was one of poor Mrs. Clary’s great consolations—that “who knows what may happen?” the wind-up of comfort to many of her disappointments. She went through all the fashionable news with much gusto—it was, she said, “on the verge of the season, and there were rumours of long waists and full skirts—it was difficult to say what would happen.” Then, gazing at me with a sorrowful expression, she exclaimed, “But you have still your figure! You have still your figure! Take care of that—such a figure for the Esterhazy pelisse! But still it would not do—you could not always keep your face to the wall. You must use goulard water and milk of roses, and not be down-hearted.” I told her I was not down-hearted—I felt it was all for the best. I assured her I was much happier than I had been for a long time; and then I drew her to speak of her customers—no difficult matter. She went over the “beauties” of the past season, and spoke of those who were “coming out.” Among the past she mentioned Lady Harvey, bridling herself up in a peculiar way when she did so. “Oh yes, certainly, Sir Oswald was a remarkable man—a great political luminary; but could not last long the way he was going on, burning the candle at both ends—writing all night, when the House was up, instead of resting. Must have great confidence in his Lady, as she went out a good deal without him. It was hard upon a pretty woman when her husband would sit among his musty papers, and cease to care whether she kept in or went out. Yes, Lady Harvey kept her ground wonderfully well, though the baby came in the way; and Sir Oswald was mightily disappointed that it was dead—he did so long for a child! But, if she must speak the truth—which

she did, of course, confidentially to a friend—yes, in the strictest confidence—she thought Lady Harvey was not sorry to be rid of the baby altogether; for her maid, a sharp Frenchwoman, who had been with her when she was Miss Mansfeld, (and I, too, remembered the woman well—ay, well), knew, she said, that of a certainty the baby would have led to words, for Sir Oswald wished her Lady to nurse it, and of course no Lady could submit to that, particularly such a lady as Lady Harvey, who had been accustomed to the greatest admiration, and would have her own way. Now," continued Mrs. Clary, "there is one thing I do not like in that maid—I do not like her morality; she has no feeling of right, and I am sorry she is where she is. She repeated over and over again that her Lady must have admiration and devotion, and could not live without it, while she did not seem to care where it came from. And Sir Oswald had become too patriotic, too eloquent, too much run after by business, to devote himself to her Ladyship, as he was in duty bound to do. She had the audacity to say she hoped her Lady would find admirers elsewhere; and she for one would not say 'wrong she did.' Lady Harvey could have every man of fashion in London at her feet, if she pleased—she had such a taking way with her! No lady had more right to devotion than her Lady. She might be a little capricious, she did not deny it, and him she cared for seemingly to-day, she would not care for to-morrow—that was her way, and that proved there was no harm in it; not a bit! She certainly had been madly in love with Sir Oswald once, there was no doubt about it; but he could not expect that to last, unless he gave up everything for her." Then Mrs. Clary rushed into a tirade against lady's maids in general, and that lady's maid in particular—then burst into raptures about a new customer, a Spanish beauty, with white camellias in her hair—and such little feet! I was too bewildered to return quickly to the one subject of my life—a terrible chill crept through me. Could it be possible, after all, that Sir Oswald was not happy? Had I sacrificed, not *one*, but *two*?

In the course of an hour I inquired if Lady Harvey liked her trimming? "Wore it once at the Drawing-room—hardly ever wears any thing twice. Those capricious ladies are excellent customers, though it requires rare patience to put up with them." Then, after meditating, she added, "No, we must have no more velvet and chenille for years to come!—the fashion is over." Poor Mrs. Clary! she was very kind to me, and really anxious for my well-doing; but I felt relieved when she was gone. I wanted to be alone with my thoughts. It seemed that I should have no reprieve; no sooner was one anxiety relieved than another sprang into its place. The "wrong" never came "right." Yet, after all, the loose and abominable chatter of a woman of narrow and impure mind was no *proof* against her mistress. She might desire to give her only the celebrity she could comprehend; because married ladies abroad encouraged troops of adorers, and the husband received them as his friends, she, perhaps, only

desired to show off her foreign breeding to Mrs. Clary, and enjoy her indignation. She was malicious—one of those creatures who delight to give pain; and to depreciate such an English gentleman as Sir Oswald would be a triumph. She was a thing made up of tinsel, and frippery, and impertinence—a coarse-minded, vicious woman, as false as she was cunning. I lashed myself into a rage against her, of which she was unworthy, and convinced myself of the impossibility of such a course of thought or conduct being pursued by any woman possessing the affections of Sir Oswald Harvey. I recalled Miss Mansfeld's passionate look of love *that* night when she flung herself upon his bosom and he carried her through the flames; then, during their previous attachment, despite her forwardness, all said she loved him—and how he loved her I knew but too well. No, no! all I had heard was the vile colouring, or still viler invention, of a depraved woman. I resolved to discover some means by which she might be removed from the household—her mistress should know her unworthiness.

Mrs. Dunbar's influence was as a direct blessing from Heaven. She never lectured, she never preached, she never argued. Her words were spoken not unintentionally—for she was quite incapable of deceit—but with a purpose. I *felt* that she understood me—that she loved me—that she desired the growth of my faith, and the cultivation of that earthly reason which is placed as a hedge round the tenderer plants and blossoms of existence, to prevent their being torn up or trampled under foot. In all spiritual things, in all scriptural knowledge, she was the counterpart of my dear grandmother, who seemed to live again in her; but in educational acquirements, in knowledge of the world, that particular world into which I had been so unexpectedly elevated, she was her superior. Yet, though she had acquired the wisdom of the one, she had lost none of the purity of the other, and appreciated the refinements which are supposed to be the birthright of "good society." She had erected her own standard of "right and wrong" upon a basis, which the world or the world's opinions could not undermine. Her principles were the firmest I ever met; her practice the gentlest, and free from ostentation: truly, her charity was that which suffereth long and is kind.

The time had arrived when I could leave Twickenham, and visit my old neighbourhood. All traces of recent disease had disappeared,—but no one could recognize me; in *that* was freedom of place and action.

I had, happily, some time known the difference between saying prayers and praying; and I did faithfully pray not to be abandoned to my own guidance.

I desired to impart my history to Mrs. Dunbar. I believed that, in reality, I should have little to tell her that she did not know. Such a confession would relieve my mind, and yield me the blessing of sympathy; but I lingered with my mystery from day to day, debating whether I had a right to impart what concerned others more than myself.

I had determined to leave Twickenham for Brecken the following Wednesday. On Monday morning the sun shone so bright, and the air was so ragrant, that I yielded, as usual, to my boy's suggestion that I should go to the river to feed the swans; and, taking my work, I chose one of those delicious corners where, screened from observation by the glories of a weeping willow, I saw every shadow reflected from the opposite side, and enjoyed the sights and sounds with which nature banquets the observer's eye and ear—reward for mute attention. In those days there were neither railroads nor steamboats in the neighbourhood of London; and the seclusion of the river was only disturbed by the patient angler, or the oars of a party intent on a pic-nic at Ham, or on one of the sedgy "Aits," the resort and shelter of water-fowl. I had an affection for this particular nook. The bank had been railed in, so that my child could drop the swans' food into the water without danger; and a break in the bank of the opposite "Ait" had been seized upon by a pair of beautiful king-fishers, who flashed and prowled, and ate their fish, without observing, or, perhaps, shy as they were, caring, that I oft-times watched them. My boy had fed the swans—who, soon discovering that his tribute was paid, floated away in their spotless dignity—and, his little arms crossed on the paling, was humming over some tune that had seized upon him during the previous day—the tenderest airs in this way are often dreadful despots, enslaving every faculty, and chaining ear and voice to the one particular melody—when a four-oared boat turned sharply round the corner of the Ait, and came into the water between me and the island. As the boats always took the channel on the other side, I was for a moment startled. My impulse was to go away: but I then remembered that I must cross the bank to escape, whereas, if I remained where I was, no one could see more than the poor drapery of my black dress.

It was a gay party; youth and pleasure, and sounds of joyful laughter, filled the air around me as the boat glided along the stream—

"Youth at the helm and pleasure at the prow."

A silk awning canopied the seats. It was, then, no ordinary "boat." Presently, a French-horn sent forth a few notes of such delicious melody, that my boy, forgetful of his own music, stood with parted lips, his beautiful hair floating around his head, his eyes wide open, and his rounded arms extended as if he desired to catch, and then strain the sounds to his heart.

One of the gentlemen suddenly exclaimed, as he came from beneath the awning—"Stop! stop the music, and look at that boy! Do, all, ladies and gentlemen, look at that boy! Ye gods! what a head! What a study altogether for Lawrence! Silence the music!" He spoke with a foreign accent: I surely knew the voice.

"Too-too!" exclaimed my child—and he stamped his little foot on the sward. "Too-too, again!"

The boat steered close to the bank.

"Oh, let him come to us! We must have him!" said a lady, while freeing herself from the curtains.

"Too-too," shouted the boy, impatiently.

"Yes, again and again, you wandering cupid, if you come to me first," she exclaimed. "Get him for me, Carlo: there, I don't want these now!" And she flung a shower of water-lilies on the stream. "I don't want these now,—I want that child!"

The gentleman made some observation that I did not catch; but he looked at me, and I heard the word "Mother." The lady's wishes were, however, not accustomed to be thwarted. She stood erect in front of the awning. I recognized her instantly. Time had added power and intelligence to that animated, earnest, beautiful face; yet had given with it an expression more fierce and decided in its wilfulness than I had ever seen it wear before.

Conscious that I could not be recognized, I gazed at my wild convent friend—she who had facilitated my escape and contracted the mysterious marriage with "Carlo," metamorphosed into the lady of quality, mingling, though very badly, the impetuosity of her foreign nature with the ease of English life. Her husband, too, however for a moment enraptured with the child, looking as cold and sarcastic as ever.

What a strange meeting!

And now the boat touched the bank, and the gentleman who had spoken was bending over my boy, who drew himself up haughtily and refused his hand.

"You frighten the child!" exclaimed the lady, springing as lightly on the sward as she had done over the crags a few short years before. "You terrify him much; you know children and dogs hate you. Play music again—continue from where you left off—catch it up."

At that moment my child was rushing towards me, when the horn gave forth one of those lengthened notes that float the air with melody: it arrested his footsteps. His animated look of surprise and joy was a new beauty, even to me. He could not move—the child was spell-bound; one foot upraised, his noble head thrown back, his eyes fixed on me as they had been when he made the attempt to reach me—his finger on his rich, pouting lip—his little frame vibrating, but not moving.

While I gazed on him I recovered my self-possession. And then the lady!—the wild, wilful, generous pupil of the mountain convent!—the passionate girl, without a desire to conceal that passion, or an idea of maidenly reserve attached to it!—and now there was, still, wildness and wilfulness, and generosity and passion, and all whirlwind!—ALL whirlwind!

XXVII.

You observe that only the gentleman and lady had at that time landed; but there was a general movement within the silk curtains, as if the whole

party were on the move. The lady stooped to caress the child. It interfered with his attention to the music—it broke the spell; and in a passion of resentment he clenched his little hand, and violently struck the beautiful face that bowed above him. The husband laughed, and repeated, "Children and dogs hate you!" and the lady, turning on him, gave voice to tones and words of violence that attracted the attention of those of the party who were beneath the awning. The sounds of the horn ceased; fair ladies and their cavaliers crowded to the side; my wilful, impatient boy, repeated his command of "Too-too again!" and in a moment, rushing forward, he slipped off the unprotected side of the bank into the water. I saw him disappear! I attempted to plunge after him, but was prevented. There were screams, and a flashing of colours, and the water raised into foam, and arms stretched from the boat, and a cry—"Saved!" Yet, still they kept me back; and at last angel hands held my boy aloft—he *was* saved! and soothing, womanly tones, like those so often heard in the convent, entered my heart, and told me my child was safe! Then there was a pause. But clear and distinct, though not loud, a mocking, cruel voice came from the boat, searing my blood so that I could not move—"Such fuss about a beggar's brat!" it said; "a boatman could have played the water-dog as well as—SIR OSWALD!"

No wonder I was paralyzed. I cannot say whether time flew or lingered; but, dripping on the bank, the roses on his cheeks scarce faded, there was my boy clinging to his father's hand—the hand that had saved him!

I found myself at his feet—I clasped his knees—I encircled both father and son in one embrace. I gazed at him; but I could speak no word—my thoughts perished on my lips—I gazed, I wondered why his features were so hatched and worn. White threads of silver mingled with his hair. With the rapidity of lightning I read a history—the least mournful part of which was aversion to such a face as mine. Yet, that yielded to his generous sympathy. As he spoke, my hands unclasped, and I bowed my face, lest its homeliness should abridge his words.

"Poor woman—poor woman! He is quite safe! Will you not take your child? Poor woman!—not poor, but rich. Rich woman, with such a child!"

No memory of me! I thought I should have rejoiced at this. But how emotion contradicts reason! I grovelled to the earth, hiding my disfigured face; but amid the woman's thrill of anguish for lost beauty came a pulsation of triumph—he confessed the richness of the treasure; his child's loveliness penetrated to his very heart. I *thought* a prayer for strength—for self-command; for like a bird fluttering beneath the upas tree, I felt that the poison of *her* shadow rested on me—one little moment more, and I shall be myself!

"Madame la Comtesse," she said, addressing the wife of "Carlos," "you have extemporized a drama; your fits of rapture are so frequent,

that I did not heed the child, until Sir Oswald said he struck you? I should like to tame that boy—he's worth the taming. What a Page he would make! Sir Oswald, you have saved him; give him to me—to be my page?"

Her page!

"He is not mine to give," was the reply; "I wish he were! See how the little fellow rests upon my shoulder! Now for a toss!" and raising him in his arms, he added—"Are you afraid?"

"Toss high!" and soon again, "More high!"

"A brave child," said his father.

"And an excellent nurse," said the taunting voice. "A baronet, and M.P.—a political leader—a powerful writer; nurse to a gipsy's child! What next, Sir Oswald? But give him to me," repeated Caroline Mansfeld, more than once; "it is easily arranged—such creatures never refuse money. Give him to me!"

I felt her foot stirring my dress—or had a serpent crept from out the copse and writhed among its folds?

"Get up, woman!" she said imperiously, "and thank the gentleman in proper words—that is, if you *are* the child's mother."

At once I grew into a giant, and stood erect before her. She laughed scornfully, and, after staring at me in her beauty, said, "It will be a matter of price—she cannot be his mother, Oswald; look at them both." "Will you give me the child to be my page? I will buy him of you!"

"Nay," exclaimed the Italian, "though he did flout me, if he is to be sold, I have the best right to him. If I had such a child I should not have a truant husband, or pass so many lonely hours." The glorious eyes of my convent friend flashed upon Caroline. There was deadly hatred between these women. "Will you trust your boy to me?" she continued.

"To *you* sooner than to *HER*," I answered; "but to neither."

"And why sooner to her than to me?" demanded Caroline. "You *shall* tell me; nay, woman, you shall not move till you have told me!"

"If you were a mother," I replied, "you could not keep that child shivering as he is—it may cost a life more precious than your own. I *will* pass!—Come, darling!" I went to the boy, and held my hand to him—"Come, darling!" But he clung to Sir Oswald, his beautiful head—round which his wet and tangled hair hung drippingly—raised, while he smiled out the words, "Too-too, again!"

"I am *now* convinced he is not her child," repeated Caroline, still more tauntingly. "Did ever child leave its mother for a stranger? Besides, *look at them!*" she reiterated. "I vow the boy has Sir Oswald's expression when he plays at RESOLUTION. But Sir Oswald's resolutions are written in water," she continued, with increased contemptuousness of manner—"those of the child would be burnt in as with fire! Will you come to me, pretty boy?"

He clung more closely to Sir Oswald, beating at her with his disengaged hand.

"I don't think," said the Countess, "I would have him for a gift. What should I do with him?"

"Conquer him—break his spirit—his heart—his neck, if needs be!" was the answer, "so he be but conquered."

"And what then, Caroline?" questioned Sir Oswald, pressing the child in his arms.

"What then? Why, the excitement over, what matters then! We women only exist while conquering."

"I will carry the child home for you," said Sir Oswald to me.

"Remember!" called out Caroline—"remember, I am to have that boy—remember!"

"Will you not lead the way?"

Mechanically I obeyed the voice: my heart beating—my brain throbbing with fearful emotions, one at war with the other, while tumultuous words jostled for the utterance I could not give.

Mechanically!

First beneath the willow, that enfolded the path in a loving embrace which the sunbeams could not penetrate; then, under the murmuring aspens; then, beside the old pollards, consecrated to birds, and trees—palaces of insect republics.

Speechless still!

Once I felt as if the path receded from my footsteps and I must fall, and the sweet voice said—

"Do not hurry! You are ill! This has been too much for you."

"Too much!" Indeed too much, I felt, for mortal woman to bear. Silent still, I led the way—but slower. There was the cottage. I struggled to speak—in vain. Now on the garden-path—what could I want to say? Silent still! Here, the path borderings—thyme, margoram, lavender, and rue—gigantic rue;—the porch!

LLANGOTHLEN: A SKETCH.

BY SIR JAMES PRIOR.

VALE of the Dee! While musing oft I lie,
 Intent on scenes which lure the heart and eye;
 When from the world the jaded soul retreats,
 Finds in some nook of thine the peace it greets;
 Pleased to escape from small yet needful cares—
 Pleased more to shut out Fashion's whims and airs;
 Fly thoughtless friends who may enjoyment spoil,
 Read e'en their letters as it were a toil!
 Ease is the aim—for this all else resigned,
 Save soft, unbroken love-links, left behind.
 Health too invites—for study's ills and throes
 Send us exhausted most to seek repose.

Or, should I stroll, what varying paths pursue!
 Skirt far thy stream, or scale the mountain view;
 Rest nigh yon cottage, rustic lore to win—
 Chat with the children or the dames within;
 Hear what misfortunes wait the Farming trade,
 No sun—no rain—bad crops from plough or spade!
 Question the Peasant, deep in herds and flocks—
 Note babbling waters vaulting o'er rough rocks;
 See from the bridge, whence tender hearts may grieve,
 How artful anglers guileless fish deceive;
 Just as their captors, scarce more wise, await
 Some treacherous hook enwrapped in worldly bait!

I thread the Village—see from out the "Hand"
 Gay travelling groups now cluster, now expand;
 Alone some wander, some employed are still—
 One lauds in Verse—one courts the Painter's skill,—
 As genius prompts—his aptful Art employs
 To grave on paper what the eye enjoys—
 For poems and pictures deep in memory stay,
 Oft fond I've sought them far as Ind away.
 When sun-scorched scenes and darkened features pall,
 How home's fair friends and landscapes we recall!

Again I turn—new combinations rise,
 Heights, groves, and gardens stamped with Autumn's dyes;

I court them all, no spot of interest lose,
 But, as in life, my own free pathway choose;
 No churlish Farmer to ill-humour yields,
 Points to the road—a hint to quit his fields.
 I seek prolific hedges—nor in vain—
 On sable berries play the boy again!
 Spend amid coverts many a dreamy hour,
 Glean from thy woods rare plant or odorous flower;
 Glance o'er where life in yonder whitened cot,
 May, if man wills it, pass without a blot.

So some have thought—by taste or fancy led—
 Who in youth's bloom from rank and fashion fled;
 Gave up their Maiden loves and Pleasure's sway,
 On Time, not Man, to cast their charms away;
 Weaned from those deep emotions, tender ties,
 Which in devoted Woman's heart arise
 For all she loves—and here estranged from strife
 Passed on unjustly by the crowds of life.*

Once thus I dreamt to dwell—'mid learned lore—
 Ere linked by Fortune to Life's labouring oar;
 When far adventures fired the youthful breast,
 And warlike wanderings banished lettered rest,
 Onward, by ceaseless novelty beguiled,
 Rocked by the surge as matrons do the child,
 Through oceans wild, or lands obscure, to stray,
 Met, yet escaped from, perils of the way;
 Scanned varying races—actions, passions, looks—
 Read uncouth nations as if living books!
 Saw Savage war with Savage—marked the Slave
 Throw Slavery's chain o'er men as free as brave,
 Ready—his own and others' rights forgot—
 To cast on all the wretch's bitterest lot,
 Till Britain wrenched the iron links of toil,
 And ease and freedom gave to many a soil.

* This allusion, as will be readily supposed, applies to Lady Eleanor Butler and Miss Ponsonby, who, influenced by rural beauties and love of seclusion, transferred themselves for life from Ireland, their native country, to Llangothlen. Their excursions hence were few, though one or two are recorded—one, indeed, by the late Charles Mathews. On their deaths, after about fifty years' residence, the experiment was renewed in the same cottage by two English ladies. One, however, died soon, which broke up the establishment. It was occupied when I was there by others—is without pretence—the front rather too thickly covered by creeping plants—and the gardens not then in the most careful order.

But ramblings ceased. To scenes of thine I flee,
 Or, if not thine, which prove akin to thee,
 As grot or dell invites me—or the glade
 Bye-paths, or hedge-rows, or yon beech's shade ;
 Unheeded stroll, no misadventures fear—
 Few fellow-wanderers cross my roving here,
 Save, if disposed on yon green bank to sleep,
 Roused by a straggling ox or wondering sheep,
 Who, while they brouse, indulge a bold-faced stare—
 As if to question what my object there !

'Tis—that from flowerets wild I sweets inhale,
 Sweep round yon steep-browed hill and trace the vale ;
 Point now my glass to heights confused and rude,
 Doubt whether there the princely Wynstay stood ;
 Fallen—yet revives—whose halls again will soar
 Fresh from their ashes—nobler than before !
 No sameness tires me—barren spots, or dull,
 All seems of varied beauty, richness, full—
 Here gay, there simple—farther, bold or grand,
 Inventive Nature plies her plastic hand,
 Moulds or adapts to each its fitting part,
 Or yields a touch—and but a touch—of Art—
 As Park or Mansion, veiled afar by trees,
 Just drops the hint of rich, though laboured, ease—
 Fond that she can in wild exuberance show
 How much to her—to Art how little, owe.

Thus vivid memory paints thy changeful hue ;
 The eye confirms it—not more warm than true ;
 I pause to praise—or saunter to describe,
 Lured by resistless rural beauty's bribe—
 That soothing, softening influence, which bestows
 Calm even on grief—to fretted minds repose ;—
 Feel, while I view thee, warmth within me reign,
 Nay, for the moment, tread alert again !
 Nor shall descending life, inactive limb,
 Or fading eye, to thee be dull or dim.
 So peaceful all—pure—picturesque appear,
 Such shall I hope to greet thee many a year !

THE PILGRIM'S SHELL.

BY SIR J. EMERSON TENNENT, K.C.S., LL.D., &c.

"Something there is, the which to leave
 Untold would not be well,
 Relating to the pilgrim's staff
 And to the scallop-shell."

—SOUTHEY.

THE *St. James's Magazine* for November, in an article on "The Japanese," written ostensibly from official authorities, contains a passage which, assuming its details to be correct, is of curious significance in an archaeological point of view. The writer, describing the recent assassination of the Regent of Japan by the armed retainers of a feudal rival, says, the conspirators assembled on the evening of the 23rd of March, 1860, disguised as "a band of pilgrims, with the ancient palmer's scallop stitched on their vests, who, weary and travel-stained with apparently a long day's journey, mounted the steep flight of steps leading to the temple of the Japanese god, Atango." The remainder of the narrative is irrelevant to the present purpose. The pretended pilgrims claimed and received the hospitalities of the temple, and on the morrow they succeeded in way-laying and murdering the Regent, near the palace of the young Emperor, which is situated in the most imposing quarter of Yeddo. The antiquarian interest of the story lies in the statement, that the assassins concealed their coats of mail under the costume of pilgrims, "*with the ancient palmer's scallop stitched on their vests*,"—an incident to which a writer in the "Edinburgh Review"* directs attention, as "a strange coincidence."

Hitherto, every authority on ecclesiastical and mediæval antiquities has been contented to refer the pilgrim's "scallop shell" to an European source: whilst the rest of his equipment has been traced to Oriental originals, from the undisputed fact that pilgrimages themselves had their rise in the mystical East. The Hindus, from the remotest ages, have made organized pilgrimages to the source of the Ganges at Gangoutri, as well as to its majestic current at Hurdwar and Benares. For centuries before the Christian era, devotees from Siam, China, and other countries, to the East of India, were accustomed to make periodical journeys across Thibet to the Himalayas, in order to revisit the scenes which had witnessed the birth of Buddha, and served as the cradle of his prodigiously extended doctrines.† To the present hour his followers preserve the practice of

* See the article, *Japan and the Japanese*, "Ed. Review," Jan. 1861, p. 46.

† HIOWEN TSHANG, "*Pelerins Buddhistes*," translated from the Chinese by STANISLAS JULIEN. See also the Introduction (p. xlv.) by M. LANDRESSE, to the *Foë-kouë-ki*; or, "*Description of Buddhist Kingdoms*:" by the Chinese Pilgrim, FA HIAN, A.D. 414.

pilgrimages; the Japanese still ascend to the sacred summit of Fusi-hama, and the Chinese resort to Teen-tae-shan in Che-keang, and other spots hallowed in their estimation from associations with Confucius.

In like manner, long prior to the hejira, and before Mahomet had enjoined in the Koran the obligation of the *hadjh* to Mecca, pilgrimages were familiar to the Arabs, who traced their institution to the days of Abraham and Ishmael.* The Jews, antecedently to the birth of Our Saviour, made annual pilgrimages to Shiloh, in Bethel;† and, at a later period, once in each year they repaired in bands, collected from their scattered villages, to the Temple at Jerusalem.‡ The story of Jesus tarrying behind to dispute with the doctors, and the unconcern of his father and mother, "supposing him to be in the company," and proceeding a day's journey homewards without him, is itself sufficient to show that the body of pilgrims assembled on that occasion was organized very much as the caravans of *hadjh* are composed at the present day for their journey to Mecca.

The practice, as it then prevailed, was perpetuated by the disciples and followers of Christ from the period of his death to the present time. Jerome states that the first Christian pilgrims appeared at Jerusalem immediately after the ascension of their crucified Master; and as the West had not then been converted to Christianity, these early devotees must have resorted thither from the East, and bore with them the customs and the costume appropriate to such devotional expeditions. The undying associations connected with the scenes which were the objects of their profoundly religious interest—

"The sepulchre of Christ—those holy fields
Over whose acres walked the blessed feet,
Which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed
For our advantage to the bitter cross," §

kept alive the devout curiosity of Christendom, and pilgrims continued to wend their way to Palestine in still increasing numbers. Irregularities and demoralization were so strongly perceptible in these impulsive enterprises, that Gregory and others of the early Fathers found themselves constrained to protest against their spiritual utility; but notwithstanding these dissuasions, the multitude, encouraged by the example of the Empress Helena and other exalted converts, poured forth in undiminished currents; and the influence of the movement, and its consequences, invested the middle ages with the most exciting of all historical episodes, in the exploits of the Crusaders.

* D'OHSSON, "*Empire Ottoman*," T. i., p. 182, iii. 55; D'HERBELOT, "*Biblioth. Orientale*," T. ii., p. 174. It is worthy of being noted as one of the advantages derived from pilgrimages, that it was to them that the celebrated geographers of Arabia and Persia, during the middle ages, were mainly indebted for the accuracy as well as the extent of their information relative to distant countries. On this subject, see REINAUD'S "*Introduction to the Geography of ABUL-FEDA*."

† Judges xxi. 19; 1 Sam. i. 3. ‡ Luke ii. 41., &c. § Henry IV., P. i. A. i. s. 1.

This uninterrupted usage of ancient times had enjoined a style of dress, for the individuals engaged in pilgrimages, which appears to have been faithfully adhered to down to the latest stages of their observance. Its prevailing characteristic was that of humbleness becoming mendicancy. The principal garment was the *scavina*; a gown of coarse woollen cloth, in imitation, perhaps, of the "raiment of camel's hair" worn by John the Baptist. So mean and valueless was this garment, that the "weeds" of the palmer became synonymous with poverty, and, like the sackcloth of the Hebrews, the very term has descended to us associated with widowhood and sorrow.

Spenser has glanced at the conventional equipments of a palmer in the following description of one:—

"A silly man, in simple *weedes* fore-worne,
And soiled with dust of the long-dried way;
His *sandales* were with toilsome travell torne,
And face, all tann'd, with scorching sunny ray;
As he had travell'd many a sommer's day
Through boiling *sandes* of Arabie and Inde—
And in his hand a Jacob's *staffe*, to stay
His weary limbs upon; and eke behind
His *scrip* did hang, in which his needments he did bind."

"*Faery Queen*," B. i. Canto iv. s. 35.

But though this picture includes the *weeds*, the *sandals*, *staff* and *scrip*, it omits other adjuncts, such as the *rosary* and the *shell*, essential to complete the equipment of the pilgrim.

FOSBROKE, in the "*Peregrinatorium Religiosum*," appended to his "*British Monachism*," has collected all the archæological lore capable of throwing light on the origin of these insignia of the ancient palmer—who, it may be observed in passing, acquired the term of "palmer" in common with that of pilgrim, because those returning from Palestine were expected to place over the altars of their respective village churches a frond from one of the palm-trees of Jerusalem. As the carriage of these leaves was a matter of difficulty, even when twined, as Dante describes them, around the staff of the pilgrim,—

"Che si reca'l bordon di palma cinto."

The staff, or *bourdon*, was in later times assumed to represent the branch or mid-rib which sustains the palm leaves; but Fosbroke asserts that the palmers of the West adopted it in imitation of the pilgrims of Syria. The probability, however, is, that its real origin is to be sought still further towards the East, as the pilgrims in Hindostan, even at the present day, bear a staff of similar length, generally surmounted by an ornamented top, from the corners of which is suspended a ring of tiny bells. Even in this latter particular the analogy is preserved; for the *bourdon* of the pilgrim from Europe was usually furnished with a hollow ornament,

capable of producing a somewhat musical note. And as the bearer throughout the entire course of his journey kept up a monotonous and reiterative chant, the droning accompaniment of his *bourdon* gave rise to the term "the burden of his song," by which we still designate the *refrain*, or that portion of a ditty which is repeated at the end of every stanza.

The use and sanctity of the staff amongst Asiatic nations is familiar to us, from the numerous passages in which it is adverted to in Scripture, associated with prolonged wanderings and journeys. The Passover, commemorative of the flight into Egypt, was ordered to be eaten, staff in hand.* The Angel of the Lord appeared unto Gideon with a staff.† It was with the staff of Elishah that Gehazi restored to life the child of the Shunamite, by laying it upon the boy's face;‡ and the Psalmist exclaims, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thy rod and thy staff they comfort me!"§

Equal in importance with the staff, was the *scrip*, or bag in which the pilgrim was to carry the food, either provided by himself, or contributed by the charity of the pious houses and persons by whom he was received. And this practice, too, has its model in the East, where the mendicants of Buddhism are invariably provided with an equivalent convenience for carrying the alms-gifts they receive. Fosbroke asserts that the scrip was copied by the Christians from the Egyptians;|| as the staff, or *bourdon*, he traces to Syria.

The *sandals* were obviously an oriental imitation; and the *rosary* (although POLYDORE VERGIL alleges that the use of beads, "*calculos ligneos*," was introduced by Peter the Hermit, in the year 1090)¶—has prevailed, from time immemorial, in India, where beads, both of wood and formed from the kernels of fruit, are still carved and strung by the wandering santons.

The only remaining article of dress peculiar to pilgrims was the *Shell*; which, though worn in the most conspicuous positions—on the hat, or on the shoulder—and uniformly identified with their distinctive costume, has been strangely dissociated from the rest of their insignia in the expositions of ecclesiastic archæologists; and it alone is attributed by them to an European source, whilst every other item has been traced to an Asiatic one. The adaption of the Scallop Shell is stated to have originated in Spain, and to have distinguished those only who made the pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James (the son of Zebedee), at Compostella. A legend, too extravagant for insertion here, associates the scallop with an incident during the voyage, when the decapitated remains of the Saint were being conveyed, in a marble ship, from the Holy Land to Spain. In passing the coast of Portugal, a knight on the shore, whose terrified and ungovern-

* Exod. xii. 11. † Jud. vi. 21. ‡ 2 Kings iv. 29. § Ps. xxiii. 4.

|| FOSBROKE, "*Brit. Monaci*," p. 422. ¶ "*De Rerum Inventor*," L. v. p. 63.

able horse had plunged with him into the sea, was rescued by the passing ship and taken on board, with his dress, when the trappings of his charger were found to be covered with these shells :—

“Sed e profundis ducitur
Natus Regis submergitur:
Totus plenus conchilibus.”*

Thus, the use of these *Veneras*, or sacred shells, by the pilgrim, would appear to be referable to no earlier period than the beginning of the ninth century, when the corpse of St. James was miraculously discovered at El Padron, near the coast, and entombed at Santiago, which thenceforth became the most renowned shrine in Europe. Such was the force of the obligation to make a pious journey thither, that it was

“Believed as well as said,
That all who in their mortal stage
Did not perform this pilgrimage
Must make it when they're dead.”

But this exposition, besides being defective in other particulars, is erroneous in one; inasmuch as the use of the scallop shell was not confined alone to the pilgrims to Compostella, but equally signalized those who had made the journey to Palestine † or Rome. Again, how came it that a shell, not peculiar to Galicia, but found in every quarter of the globe, ‡ should become the emblem of Spanish piety alone?

Fosbroke demurs to the claim of monopoly for Spain, and adverts to the opinion propounded by Dr. Clarke, that the scallop shell was a symbol of Astarte at an age far anterior to the institution of Christian pilgrimages. § Astarte was the “Ashtoreth” of the Sidonians; she, in all probability, was the representation of the Moon; and her worship, which was

* The legend may be seen, extracted from the “*Sanctoral Portugues*” and the “*Espana Sagrada*,” amongst the notes appended to SOUTHEY’S “*Pilgrim to Compostella*.” A pictorial representation of it, as old as the fifteenth century, forms one of the decorations of the chapel of Saint James, in the ancient church of the Ara-cœli, which occupies the site of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus at Rome, and in it the scallop-shells are profusely displayed upon the trapping of the knight’s black horse.

† At Bethlehem there is, to the present time, an active trade in the carving of shells for sale to the pilgrims. The one used is the large mother-of-pearl shell, *Meleagrina margaritifera*, the surface of which they ornament with quaint scriptural devices.

‡ The Escallop, the *Pecten* of conchologists, is found on the shores of Europe as far north as Norway; on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of America; on both sides of Africa; in Arabia and India; and as far east as China and Japan. In the latter islands occurs one of the most striking species known to naturalists, the *Pecten nobilis*. The shell generally borne by pilgrims, called in France *Coguille de St. Jacques*, is found in the Mediterranean, and, in allusion to its devotional uses, has been named *Pecten Jacobæus*; it is the *Ostrea Jacobæa* of Linnæus.

§ FOSBROKE’S “*Encyclop. of Antiquities*,” Vol. i. p. 303.

as ancient as the days of Abraham, appears to have been carried into every part of the world where the Phœnicians had either colonies or trade.

FULLER, in his "*Church History*," is equally opposed to the pretensions of Spain; and says the scallop shell was borne by the pilgrims in Palestine because its concavity adapted it to be used by them as a cup or a dish.* This explanation I am disposed to accept as the true one, for a further reason—that it does away with the anomaly of attributing the origin of this one article to *the West*, whilst all the rest are admittedly Oriental. Fuller's solution brings the use of the shell into entire consistency with the custom of the pilgrims of Ceylon, Siam, and all other Buddhist nations as far as the confines of China; amongst whom the practice is invariable for the wandering mendicant to provide himself with a small "begging-cup," or "alms-bowl," which accompanies him in every peregrination.† For this article the cup-like shell of the escallop renders it a suitable substitute, and its utility is obvious in raising water to quench the bearer's thirst.

Strengthened by these analogies, there would seem to be an end of all further question, if, as stated by the writer in *THE ST. JAMES'S MAGAZINE*, the scallop shell is borne at the present day by the pilgrims of Japan. The conclusion, then, would be irresistible, that the legend of Santiago is a modern myth; and the Asiatic origin of the shell, like that of every other item of the Christian palmer's equipment, becomes a fact as historically conclusive as it is archæologically curious.

* FULLER, Cent. xii. p. 42.

† HARDY'S "*Manual of Buddhism*," p. 169, and HARDY'S "*Eastern Monachism*," p. 64. In the "*Visions of Pierce Ploughman*," a person is introduced in the apparel of a pilgrim with "a bolle and a bagge." This bowl one might be ready to suppose was to be used instead of the shell; but a few lines lower down the author particularizes the "shell of Gales," or Galicia, as borne by the palmer who had been to Mount Sinai.

THE TRACY FAMILY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A SKELETON IN EVERY HOUSE."

IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.

CRUISE OF THE BLUE JACKET.

FIRST, a few intermediary sentences: then, leaving the fortunate lady for a while, I make sail in the track of the audaciously lucky Letter of Marque, Blue Jacket.

The great principle of the Earl Dundonald's scheme, before spoken of, for employing (and wearing out) the French armies in France, presupposed the mastery of the seas by the British, and a rigorous blockade of the French war-ports. Those indispensable conditions had been attained when, perhaps, the greatest of naval commanders after Nelson—(*longo intervallo*, the Earl would himself have cheerfully admitted)—propounded his plan. He proposed that, say thirty thousand, well-disciplined British soldiers should be embarked in fleet transports—the more numerous the expeditions, if skilfully combined, the merrier; which soldiers should be thrown upon naked parts, in a military sense, of the French coast, which nakedness comprises nineteen-twentieths of any coast in Europe. The troops so landed, and secure of unmolested reembarkation, at pleasure, were to march rapidly inland, to a safe distance, burning, destroying, as they marched. Uproar, of course, amongst the French troops, as the news spreads, the fires of blazing crops at night their speediest signals. They assemble in hot haste, and march without rest to exterminate the invader. But the invader is gone long before they arrive in sufficient numbers within sight of the rascally red-coats; nay, at the very moment they have reached, panting and blowing, what should have been the scene of a well-merited vengeance, and their general is meditating a flaming despatch announcing that the infamous Leopards have been driven into the sea—those Leoline Leopards—(we are certainly not obliged to accept, without qualification, Napoleon's zoological depreciation of the British Standard)—at that very moment those Leoline Leopards, sailing with the wind, might be playing the same unpleasant trick some thirty or forty miles off! *Sacre-r-r-r-re nom, de nom de Dieu!!* The historic swearing of our army in Flanders would, I suspect, read like reverential supplications by the side of the maledictions which a few months of such a game would call forth from the hot and thirsty throats of the grand army, however *hors d'haleine*, out of breath, the brave, indignant, worn-off-their-legs veterans might be. Seriously, no one can doubt the feasibility of Lord Dundonald's plan—granted the indispensable postulate of mastery at sea. With steam-transports, it could of course be much more easily carried out than when his lordship proposed its adoption, and with vastly more terrible effect.

The predatory cruise of the Blue Jacket was planned upon the same

theory, Skipper Smith's miniature means obliging him of course to immensely modify it in practice. His seventy rascals would only be able to venture a very few miles inland, generally at night, and their aim would be not to harass the enemy, but to fill their own pockets. To facilitate the carrying out of that object, Skipper Smith had diligently cultivated the acquaintance of a number of French emigrants, natives of the North of France, domiciled at Newcastle, and by that means made himself well acquainted with the places along the coast where he could most profitably employ his *Blue Jackets*, and with least risk of interruption by any considerable force, even of Gendarmes or National Guards. He and his fellows were well-suited to the work in hand, and their success gave proof of the soundness of the Danton maxim, that *L'Audace, et encore l'Audace* is the true secret of triumph in such enterprises.

Towards evening of the morrow of the day on which the Blue Jacket sailed from the Tyne, that vessel was standing, off and on, and as close in as was prudent, to the coast of France, about a league more or less north of Calais. The weather was clear, and Skipper Smith intently perusing, so to speak, the country within view of his telescope. Close by him stood a man with whom he talked in a quiet undertone; now and then handing him the glass. This man was a French mariner who, originally hailed from Boulogne, had, some years previously, left France in a hurry—for *peu de chose*, he averred—perhaps some trifling matter of theft, burglary, homicide—what not,—and for whom *Patrie* and *Poche*, Country and Cash, were convertible terms. On board the Blue Jacket he was known only as Philippe; though it may be hardly doubted that he once had a surname it would not have been an insult or a danger to pronounce. This man Skipper Smith made excellent use of, and appears to have trusted as far as a pistol of short range could throw a bullet with unerring effect.

"I could feel my way blindfolded to the convent of our Lady of Grace, and old Misère's Château," remarked Philippe, "but the distance is full three leagues, and it is time your boule-dogs should begin to make ready. It will be absolutely dark for about an hour only, before the moon rises, and your singular French Light Infantry must not, sacred Blue! be seen disembarking from a ship. Dam! that would ruin all at starting! Once landed, the game will go on gaily—march of itself."

Skipper Smith agreed, and ordered fifty previously selected boule-dogs to don French-soldier uniforms, and arm themselves with musket, bayonet, and sabre.

That was soon done, and to a near observer, very droll boule-dogs, amazing French *Infanterie Légère*, they must, so rigged, have looked. Still, seen by a faint moonlight—the Queen of Night had not nearly filled her horns—it would scarcely occur to the French peasant or proprietor mind, that in that guise a gang of English *canaille* were audaciously violating the inviolable, sacred, soil of France, were passing in insolent proximity

before their very huts—houses—eyes! A great risk, no question, for all that; but—*L'Audace, et encore l'Audace*. Skipper Smith was as thoroughly impressed with the wisdom of that war-axiom as the Hero of the Nile himself. The reader will good-naturedly excuse my mentioning in the same sentence Horatio Nelson and Skipper Smith—star-fire, —street mud! Still, I again say that Smith, *alias* Tracy, was as insensible to personal fear, and had as clear, intuitive a perception of the secret of sea-fight success, as he whose pale face and immortal signal will never fade from the memories of Englishmen—or not, at all events, till the overwhelming catastrophe shall have occurred, a sequence of which is to be that preposterous New Zealander complacently sketching the ruins of St. Paul's from a broken arch of Waterloo Bridge, for the delectation of the artistic *dilettanti* of Auckland.

This by the way. I may be permitted to add, that my estimation of the courage and resource of Skipper Smith will be readily endorsed by every naval man—and there must be not a few still living, who recognize him under that name, and are cognizant of exploits, a few of which the scope of this narrative allows me, and that but briefly, to touch upon.

The boule-dog, sea-dog *Infanterie Légère*, were togg'd off in full fig; the main-brace had as usual been handsomely spliced; and dark, moonless night having fallen, Skipper Smith's Light Infantry tumbled into the boats alongside, and were swiftly, silently, rowed ashore. The landing was quietly effected, and the sailor-soldiers marched, after sea boule-dogs' manner of marching, boldly inland. In a few minutes the faint gleam of bayonets vanished in the thick night, the swinging sailor-tread ceased to be audible to the men in the boats, who, pursuant to order, pulled back to the Blue Jacket, much doubting that they should ever see the blue-light signal which was to announce the return of their mates. Mad mates, they must have secretly thought; yet whilst so thinking would, I have not the slightest doubt, have, every mother's son of them, forfeited a week's tobacco and grog to have been of the party—and that, it will be admitted, would have been a large price to pay for such a privilege!

This extraordinary *raid*, of which confused, conflicting reports were published in the local papers, was in the main successful; but it was a very touch-and-go business. The Château D'Ivry, the residence of Sieur Dulong, was pillaged of a large quantity of gold and silver plate, for amassing which it appears Dulong had a sort of mania—a circumstance well known to Maître Philippe. Monsieur Misère, by the way, was a nick-name given to Dulong on account of his penurious habits. The convent chapel was also plundered of the silver vessels used in the celebration of divine service. The booty was pitched into one of Dulong's carts, and but for an unfortunate temptation that came in the way of Smith's *Infanterie Légère* all would have ended happily for the exultant scamps. A number of them found their way into Dulong's cellar, tasted his excellent

champagne-brandy—he was not penurious in regard to self-gratification—and liked it so much that Skipper Smith's menaces, commands, entreaties, warnings, to leave the celestial liquor, were as unavailing as *Caliban's* to *Stephano*. The liquor was not earthly, and they cared nothing for frog-eating Frenchmen—not they! There was plenty of time; and so on. Smith was terribly enraged, but did not in his passion forget to send off the plate-laden cart, under the escort of the soberest of his squad. Unwilling to abandon his men, since to do so would be to abandon, at all events to indefinitely postpone, his enterprise, Smith—Philippe aiding—continued to urgently remonstrate with the reeling, hiccupping fools, till the gallop of numerous horse upon the hard road caught his anxious ear. A servant had contrived to escape from the place in which he was confined, who at about a league distant from the château met with some twenty mounted gendarmes, to whom he, of course, immediately unfolded his wondrous tale, the truth of which the astonished Frenchmen determined to test without the delay of a moment.

Smith's *Infanterie Légère* were not so drunk as to be incapable of appreciating the gravity of the situation; and, seizing their muskets, out of the cellar they scampered pell-mell, gaining the road a minute or so before the gendarmes rode furiously up, not drawing bridle till within less than twenty paces of them. The Brigadier in command loudly requested a parley; but parleying was not Skipper Smith's game, and his reply was an order to his men to fire. They obeyed, after a fashion—the bullets that did not strike the ground in front of the gendarmes flying over their heads. It is probable that not half a dozen of Smith's fellows could have reloaded their pieces. That, however, the French horsemen could not know; and finding themselves so much outnumbered, they wheeled, and rode off for help, first discharging their pistols at the brigands, which pistol-volley caused two of the said brigands to bite the dust. There was not a moment to lose: the dead bodies were left where they fell, and away, helter-skelter, went, half-sobered, half-frightened, Smith and Co. They were lucky enough to reach the boats in safety: the plate and other valuable plunder had been already embarked.

Skipper Smith's first essay in arms suggested two important reflections; one, that dressing his sailors in soldier-uniform was not the very clever *ruse* he had supposed it to be. Their unsilenceable tongues were sure to betray them, and muskets were the least efficient weapons they could be armed with. Dash, rapidity of movement, were the main elements of success in such warfare; and his rascals, in loose sailor-togs, armed only with pistols and light cutlasses, would get over the ground at a much faster rate, and be far more formidable foes than when soldier-strapped, equipped, and armed. He was quite convinced upon that point, and jotted down a mental memorandum, only to use the uniforms under such peculiar circumstances as he foresaw might occasionally occur. The next most pressing consideration was, how to prevent his fellows from

getting into a cellar stocked with champagne-brandy, or, when there, getting them out again in good time, with heads and legs equal to the situation. How nearly had the impossibility of doing so brought them all to grief that very night! Finally, to be done with this halting-stage of the story, he resolved, after consultation with Philippe, to propose that those who should refuse to leave any house or place when ordered to do so, should forfeit their share of plunder—or, as it was more delicately phrased, prize-money; a stipulation agreed to by the Blue Jackets, with the proviso, that as many casks as possible of champagne-brandy or other choice liquor that fell in their way should be brought off, and served out on board as extra grog.

Whilst this important matter was under discussion, the Blue Jacket was slipping southward with a five-knot breeze. The *concordat* settled, Skipper Smith had leisure for the more pleasing task of counting his gains. The booty secured could not, roughly reckoned, be worth less than two thousand pounds—thirteen hundred, say, for himself, seven divisible amongst the crew—and obtained at the inconsiderable expenditure of two men, who, in fact, were guilty of their own deaths. A very promising beginning: he should thrive: Profit and Patriotism would join hands; Lucre and Love of country embrace each other. Hip! hip! Hurrah!

What an immense chasm, it struck me, when I first glanced through the blurred and blotted memoranda upon which this story is based, must at this time have already yawned between Arthur Tracy, the accomplished Eton student, and Skipper Smith, the vulgar, greedy, freebooter! And, alas! that chasm will widen, deepen, as the years flit by.

It would require several thick volumes to minutely narrate the exploits of Skipper Smith whilst in command of the Blue Jacket. In these pages I can but glance at—catalogue them. His second, law-of-nations-sanctioned burglary, was effected near Saint Valéry, Department of the Somme;—amount of plunder unsatisfactory. The next, at about a league from Dieppe, with better fortune. Two or three nights afterwards a *raid* was attempted near Breteuil, Calvados, upon which occasion the Blue Jackets, having ascertained that a dragoon regiment, on its march from Caen to Cherbourg, happened to be in dangerous proximity to their sacred selves, retreated with undignified precipitation and scant booty. Rounding Cape La Hogue, as they call the northern horn of St. Michael's Bay, the Blue Jackets made a descent upon Bricquêtre, levied more or less of black mail, and, as in all other instances, got clear off before the sweating soldiers could arrive to the rescue. Five men were expended,—drink-delivered into the power of the Philistines,—during those four little enterprises, and of course never turned up again. How should they?

The log of the Blue Jacket contains little or nothing of sufficient importance to transcribe (merely dittoes repeated of sudden small descents upon unguarded parts of the coast, and swift scamperings back to the

boats, with more or less of plunder) till after the lapse of about six months—October 9th, 1806—upon which day—night, I mean—Skipper Smith and his fellows, again transformed into French Light Infantry, had the inconceivable audacity to land under cover of darkness at a point of the Mediterranean coast about midway between Marseilles and Toulon, but nearer the Phocæan city than the war-port over which first rose the Star of Bonaparte; both ports being at the time strictly blockaded by Collingwood.

About a league inland from the spot at which Skipper Smith landed stood then—I suppose now stands—a convent church dedicated to Saint Agnes; at whose shrine, sanctified by holiest relics, the votaries of the Saint, maidens, chiefly, as I understand, had for centuries offered costly gifts.

A goodly share of those rich gifts Skipper Smith by his audacious *raid* seized, and got clear off with. And, in that convent church dedicated to Saint Agnes, John Smith, *alias* Arthur Tracy, met his fate,—in the very unalarming shape of a handsome English girl, Constance Gower, born at Clifton, Bristol, some nineteen years ago.

Most readers are aware, that at the rupture of the truce of Amiens, Napoleon, in the plenitude of his absolutism, issued orders to seize every British man, woman, and child, in France, and detain them till peace should be restored between the two countries. The individuals thus seized were called *detenus*, and were relegated to—that is, compelled to reside in such parts of France as authority dictated. Amongst the *detenus* were Mr. and Mrs. Arnold, and their orphan niece, Constance Gower. This family were relegated to Marseilles and its vicinage. They were Catholics; and the thought occurred to the uncle and aunt to place Constance in the Convent of Saint Agnes—for her soul's health, they pretended, but chiefly because the aunt-in-law—a vain, imperious woman, much younger than her husband, to whom she had not been very long married—had conceived a vehement dislike, hatred indeed, of poor Constance, already looking upon her as a future and formidable competitor for the favour and fortune of Mr. Arnold, with the boy or girl of her own that would, she hoped, be happily ushered into the world after the lapse of a few months.

Constance Gower—impulsive as Love; gentle, sensitive as Sorrow; of child-like Faith—submitted, without remonstrance, to the cruel decree which was to close the story of her young joyous life in conventual gloom and seclusion. The impressionable maiden seems, indeed, to have rejoiced for a time in her change of abode and companionship. The nuns were kind: the music, the flowers, the incense, processions, excited her imagination; and in due time, passively acquiescent, Constance Gower was professed, vowed, by a hollow form of words—expressive of anything but the true, natural yearnings of a young girl's heart or intellect—to celibacy; to be shut out for ever from a world which God had gifted her to

grace and adorn. The reaction came, in her case, with more than ordinary swing and violence. Her very faith wavered, grew faint, beneath the oppressive formalism of such a life. I pause a moment to say, that I have no wish to decry conventual institutions: I know little or nothing of the general working of such systems; but it is necessary, if Constance Gower is to command the generous sympathy of my readers, that the exact truth in her case should be told.

Such was the state of the impulsive maiden's mind when Smith and his men forced their way into the isolated convent church, and sacrilegiously sacked its treasures. The nuns, with the exception of Constance Gower, fled, shrieking. She, instantly recognizing that they were Englishmen—heretics of course—addressed their commander with passionate, piteous insistence; entreating, adjuring him, by every sentiment of manly sympathy and compassion, to rescue her from the living death to which she was condemned, and afford her means of reaching her relatives in England. Touched with the beauty and distress of his young and charming countrywoman, Smith at once acceded to her request; and an hour afterwards the fugitive nun was safe on board the Blue Jacket, which before day dawned was out of sight of land, steering for Malta.

The *Coup de Pirate*, as the nocturnal pillage of the sacred shrine of Saint Agnes, and the alleged forcible abduction of a nun by a band of disguised ruffians, was designated by the French papers, excited the wildest rage; and in the end, though indirectly, put an extinguisher upon Skipper Smith's Letter of Marque career. As soon as the facts had been officially verified by the nuns, and the confession of one of the crew of the Blue Jacket—who, groping about the passages of the convent, in quest of liquor probably, had fallen down a flight of stone steps, at the bottom of which he remained stunned, motionless, till long after his comrades—not missing him in the hurry and confusion—had departed, and he himself was kicked into consciousness by furious peasants, whom the alarm-bell had roused from their slumbers, and who, that confession made, was summarily shot;—those facts, I repeat, officially verified, a vessel, bearing a flag of truce, left Marseilles to communicate with the commander of the blockading squadron and protest against the permission of such outrages. Neither the nationality of the nun, nor the execution of the sailor, appears to have been mentioned. The French officer was courteously received, and dismissed with the assurance, that if anything had been done not warranted by Letter of Marque licence—(and the forcible carrying off of a nun was unquestionably an atrocious excess of such licence)—the Captain of the Privateer should be visited with condign punishment.

Five or six days afterwards, directly it was known that the Blue Jacket was at Malta, an officer, bearing the Admiral's directions in the matter, sailed in a sloop-of-war for that port.

The case against Skipper Smith broke down at the outset. Unquestionably he had a legal warranty for distressing the enemy by seizing

his property wherever he could lay hands upon it; and though the "Service" did not condescend to what the French—of all the birds in the air and fishes in the sea—they who had annexed Holland, stolen Switzerland, pillaged Italy—loftily denounced as piratical warfare, it was well known that this sort of work was precisely that which Captains of Letters of Marque who knew their business were expected to perform. Moreover, the conventional scruple of the Service was, closely examined, seen to be mere fudge. No casuist, however skilled in the art of splitting hairs, could possibly establish any real moral distinction between seizing the private property of French men or women upon land, or capturing it upon the sea.

As to the forcible carrying off of the nun, that was proved, not only by verbal testimony of the young lady herself, to be a mere sham, but by her marriage with the gallant rescuer of his imprisoned young country-woman—Constance Gower having become Mrs. Smith three days before the investigating officer's arrival at Malta. The Captain of the Blue Jacket was not only acquitted of all blame with reference to that incident in his bold enterprise, but highly commended for acting as he did. "You would richly have deserved to have been shot, Mr. Smith," said the officer, "had you *not*, under such circumstances, brought off an English lady—old or young, ugly or beautiful!"—a judgment which Collingwood emphatically approved.

I here turn over a brief page of Skipper Smith's history, which, if I read it aright, and I am pretty sure I do, proves that every trace of gentlemanly feeling, all sense, not only of honour, but of common honesty, had gone out of him.

The deadly hazard of the game, which up to that time he had played successfully, was by that time clearly understood and appreciated by him. His marriage with the beautiful, most loveable Constance Gower, whom he doted upon with all the fervour of his ardent sensuous nature, deepened by its future-illuminating brightness the darkness of that peril—and his charming wife loved him! To her he was the *preux chevalier*, the gallant knight by whom she had been rescued from living death, and raised to affluence. For her he had engaged the most sumptuous lodgings to be found in Malta, and was heaping upon her costliest luxuries. There was the rub, though she knew it not. How to best support an expenditure which so delighted his young, just unconvented wife, was the question.

The state of affairs was precisely this. The earnings of the Blue Jacket, during her half-year's cruise, might be estimated at about ten thousand pounds, of which not one shilling had been paid over to the crew, who were becoming clamorous for payment, Master Philippe urging them on. A pestilent knave, that. The crew's share would amount to between three and four thousand pounds—a vast, immense sum. Now, he (Smith) had lately obtained reliable statistics of a fabulously

profitable trade for which the Blue Jacket was admirably adapted; and all the hands required would be about twenty, half of whom might be cheap, coloured fellows, half-breeds. An immense saving; omitting the between three and four thousand pounds—a startling sum, not to be easily replaced.

I hear those mutterings of the man quite plainly, as I read this portion of his journal; and they, to my mind, give plainest significance to his sudden intimacy with Captain Somers of the Thetis frigate, refitting at Malta for service in the distant East, and sadly short-handed!

That with respect to which there can be no possible misapprehension is, that the Blue Jacket put to sea about an hour before the Thetis frigate, by which she was quickly overhauled and ordered to lie to. A numerous party, armed to the teeth, then boarded the Blue Jacket, and impressed into the King's service fifty of the pick of her crew; hurried them *volens-volens* on board the frigate, which immediately filled, and proceeded on her voyage to the Pacific.

The Blue Jacket returned to Malta, shipped stores, took on board Mrs. Smith, and sailed forthwith, shaping her course for the Brazils.

NEMESIS.

Thus had prematurely come to an end Skipper Smith's audacious application, in Europe, of the good old rule, the simple plan, that they shall take who have the power, and they shall keep who can. Once only had he, bringing into play his Spanish uniforms, attempted a shy at the Dons, at some point on the coast of Granada about twenty leagues or there-away eastward of Gibraltar, at which place he had remained several weeks, selling his plate, &c., of course to some of the numerous Jews who infest the fortress. The enterprise not only completely failed, but went nervously near to bring the *Blue Jackets* engaged, suddenly up with a round turn, hemp necklace fashion, *sus. per col.*, or as a military favour, an attainment of the same unpleasant result by a curt order—"Quo los fusillas: Yo, El Rey," (Let them be shot: I, the King)—from Madrid; which would have been a quite legitimate decision, Spain having *de facto* repudiated alliance with the foes of Great Britain, which *de facto* repudiation Skipper Smith was, perhaps, unaware of. Be that as it may, his Anglo-Spaniards had hardly landed when light-signals, called attention to by swiftly-successive cannon-shots, flared at the mast-heads of the Blue Jacket. The look-outs had discerned with their night-glasses nine or ten heavily-armed *guarda-costas*, sweeping silently within shadow of the land towards the spot where Smith had disembarked. Almost at the same moment, the Captain of the Blue Jacket ascertained, from a scout sent on in advance, that a considerable military force was lying in ambush not a quarter of a mile ahead. A precipitate retreat to the boats was the only chance; a chance which turned up in their favour. The boats were gained before the *guarda-costas* were near enough to assail them, except

with cannon balls, which balls either fell short, went over ahead or astern of them, amidst the derisive shouts of the British sea-scamps. The Blue Jacket was reached, and the pursuit of that water-witch by the lagging lubber-handled *guarda-costas* would have been simply ridiculous. The character of the Blue Jacket, and the secret of the expedition, had no doubt been revealed to the Spanish authorities by one or more of the swarming Iberian spies at Gibraltar, where Smith blushed to remember he had asked questions, touching certain localities, of his Israelitish friends, which would enable a dull fool to make a shrewd guess as to about where the English freebooter would attempt his next descent.

This was one of the warnings which determined Smith to woo the changeful goddess, Fortune, under conditions and in an hemisphere where her darkest frown would not, at all events, necessarily or probably prove a sentence of death.

An exquisitely blissful, luxurious Future, which it would be sheer fatuity to needlessly imperil by rash adventure, was, since he paid his *devoirs* at St. Agnes' shrine, fast painting itself in brilliant colours upon the retina of his imagination—a wealthy, splendid home, namely, in the sunny clime of the Brazils, irradiated, graced, by the presence of beauteous, trustful, loving Constance, and gradually peopling with rose-lipped reproductions of her sweet self. A few years of active enterprise in the new line of business he had traced for himself would realize the entrancing dream; and the remainder of their days which two so young, so full of buoyant life, might reasonably expect to be very many, would be passed in tranquil happiness and honour. With such fond illusions lightening in his busy brain did Arthur Tracy—as he had better again be for us, though not for years to come will that name knell in the ear of Constance Gower—speed joyously with favouring gales to the port of Bahia in the Brazils, near which, either from caprice or information he had obtained of the superior eligibility for his purposes of that locality, he intended to permanently set up his household gods—chief amongst whom, but of that he did not dream, will be the domestic Até, wearing the triple mask of conjugal and parental Love and sensuous Pleasure!

The vocation which Tracy had so joyfully embraced was neither more nor less than the trade in Negro slaves. Literally an exhaustless mine of wealth, worked with unbounded facility and without the least risk, in the palmy days when there had not loomed upon even the apprehensions of the man-stealers the terrible *spectra* of a British Preventive Squadron.

Well, the Blue Jacket, Letter of Marque, arrived safely at Bahia, where quietly repudiating Letter of Marque, nationality, and name, she, after having been thoroughly fitted for her new duties, and named the *Constancia*, sailed under the Brazilian flag for the African coast. I have forgotten to mention in the proper place, that Monsieur Philippe had been cunningly left behind at Malta, his fair share of booty—according to his own mode

of computing it—not having been handed over to him. A small matter in itself apparently; but a real or fancied injustice, how trifling soever weighed in *avoirdu pois*, material scales, has often potent propulsion in the whirligig of Time, which brings round its revenges.

Some time before the *Constancia*, built in the Tyne, sailed out of Bahia, Constance—breathing, beauteous Constance, framed by Nature in one of Nature's happiest inspirations, but, through carelessness or fate, of fragile materials—speaking of sap, not fibre—had been domiciled by her doting husband in a luxurious abode, and amply provided with all appliances of elegant affluence. Ay, and he was her chivalrous knight, *sans peur et sans reproche*, when she smilingly blessed his enterprise—that, namely, of kidnapping men and women of unrecognized colour, and selling them at an immense profit into irredeemable bondage.

I am not about to follow the *Constancia* in her many slave-trips, extending over a period of eight years. Enough to say, that Tracy, following out with skill, energy, and unfailing good luck, the fundamental principle of commercial success—buying in the cheapest, selling in the dearest market—realized during those eight years what would even in this country and at the present day be esteemed a very large fortune. He himself, insanely greedy of gold as he was, appeared content with his winnings, and yielding readily to the persuasion of his idolized wife, sold his famous craft, and resigned himself with seeming gladness to a life of luxurious ease and social distinction—coloured—illuminated—in the end blasted, consumed—by the purple, arrowy lights of ardent, poignant love for Constance and his children!

It would be unfair not to state, that during those eight fortune-chasing years Arthur Tracy gave new and striking proofs of high and generous qualities, especially of a calm judgment, which, in fearfulest straits took counsel only of his courage, and who more than once risked his own life under appalling circumstances in the monster-teeming jungles and rivers of Africa, to save that of another. It was a common saying with the old salts of the *Constancia*, that the Skipper would be a match single-handed for Old Nick himself! Of such mingled yarn are the best and worst of us made up!

I especially remark upon the fearless, dare-devil temperament of Arthur Tracy, forasmuch that only by such a man, and he practised in frightfulest peril, would a terrible incident in his life, to be presently related, though its exact literal verity has been established by the clearest evidence, appear to be of possible achievement.

Leaving for a while Mr. and Mrs. Smith in their sensuous Paradise, not yet Lost, we wing our mind-flight to England, alighting first at Stone Hall, Norfolk, next paying a brief visit, "*pour prendre congé*," for a long while, to Clifton, Bristol.

Our old acquaintance, Mrs. Arthur Tracy, *ci-devant* Mrs. Lydia Warner, and for a long time since, by royal grace, Mrs. Charlton, is we find fasci-

nating, handsome, as ever. You would hardly believe she is more than two or three years older than when she sailed from Guernsey to Plymouth, but for the evidence of her daughter Emmeline, the fair girl seated by her upon an ottoman, and commonly known as Miss Charlton, who cannot be much less than fifteen years of age. In the same room, busied with fishing-tackle, is a youth, James Charlton, so called,—who, though really some years the young lady's junior, appears from his precocious height and vigorous, well-knit frame, to be if anything older than his half-sister. A fine youngster, no one could deny; but no one knows, save Mrs. Charlton, that the latent devil which, suddenly aroused, flashes through his fine dark eyes, and curls his finely-cut, firmly-set lips, are his father's. Of that father she seldom spoke,—seldom thought, except when that father seemed, when James Charlton was in certain moods of mind, to visibly confront her in the person of his son: a high-minded youth withal, passionately attached to his mother and sister,—his mother before all, for whom he would at any moment have flung down his life as freely as a pin.

They were about to leave Stone Hall in a few days for Clifton. Mr. Sherwood, immediately after his return from Madras, had purchased for a song the carcasses of several villas at Clifton. These formed part of the property devised by him in trust to Mrs. Charlton, by whom they had been completed. One of them she had lately furnished for her own use, and proposed to herself occupy it for the future—a permanent change of air having been recommended for Emmeline, who did not enjoy very robust health, and the air of Clifton being pronounced to be all that could be desired. Mrs. Charlton and family accordingly took up their abode at Avon Villa, Clifton, at about the same time that Arthur Tracy relinquished the slave trade, and surrendered himself to domestic quietude and perpetual exile in the Brazils. How widely, continuously divergent, never to tangle again, seemed to run off the threads of those two lives. Ay,—seemed!

The reader would have been sure, had I omitted to tell him, that Mrs. Charlton might, had she pleased to do so, have again changed her name, selecting which she chose from a dozen or more, belonging to quite eligible parties. Happily for her, parental, maternal love was not an avenging Até, but a guardian Angel, by whose pure influence she was saved from bitterest humiliation, from scathing shame—moral ruin! She would live in the lives of her children,—refuse to be bound by another tie!

The gilded current of a brilliant unclouded Time, upon which floated the gay life-bark, containing, closely clasped in blissful embrace, our Brazils acquaintance, flowed smoothly, brightly on, for some years after Tracy's abandonment of business pursuits. True, they had lost their first-born child—Constance; but that occurred during infancy, and the void made, though keenly felt at the time, had been since abundantly filled up by gracious God-gifts of five charming children—Arthur (the husband disliked his own name of John), Clara, Edward, John—the wife

would insist he should be named John, and in her turn consented—though she had a superstitious objection to give another the name inscribed at the head of a little green grave, still often watered by her tears—that the last should be baptized Constance.

Beauteous buds of promise were they all; beauteous buds, not one of which, it soon came to be feared, would blossom into healthy human flowers. By a mysterious fatality they passed away in unbroken sequence as soon as they had attained their sixth or seventh year; not stricken down by any known, tangible disease, but gradually sinking, fainting out of life till there were five tiny green graves close by each other in the cemetery. Constance, the youngest, alone survived, for a brief period it was believed, and black despair fell like a pall over the not long since joyous, sunny lives of the bereaved father and mother.

Those terrible blows, striking where they were most keenly sensitive, fell with crushing weight upon both, but with far greatest severity upon the wife, who would not be comforted. A feeling of superstitious terror grew and fastened upon her mind. Her husband, brave, generous, incapable of grave offence towards God or man, had not drawn down upon them that terrible visitation. No, no; it was she, the perjured nun, who had solemnly vowed herself to live and die the spouse of Christ, that had caused Him who said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," to pour forth upon them the vials of His dreadful wrath. Almost vainly did Tracy reason with his beloved wife, urge over and over again the example of Luther, a name revered by many millions of enlightened pious Christians, who had married Catherine de Bora, a professed nun, and gloried in having done so—in having superseded, as it were, an unnatural vow by the natural, holy one, pronounced at the marriage altar. This last argument made some impression upon her. "True, true," she would murmur—some beams of their former radiance flashing faintly from her dimmed eyes,—“True, true: the vow binding me to you, dear husband, you to me, is in itself a holy one; and may, as your Church says, have lawfully superseded vows which I was coerced—yes, that is true—I clasp, hug, its truth to my heart—may have lawfully superseded, as your Church says—vows I was morally coerced to take. Yes, yes; that is a blessed truth. I should like to speak with a Protestant clergyman, but there is not one to be found in this glaring, hot, life-stifling country.”

“Shall we go for a few years to Europe, Constance—to England, if you will? I have lately thought, that a bracing northern clime might have saved our lost ones, might now save our last hope.”

The mother caught with wild, almost frantic joy, at the proposition. Yes, yes; to England without delay. To Clifton, of which the health-breathing air, bringing with it odours of her youth, often, in dreams, fanned her cheek, and played with her hair. To England! Clifton! and Constance might yet be saved—her own bruised spirit healed!

Tracy hesitated for a moment—only for a moment. What, after all,

had he to fear by sojourning for awhile at Clifton? He had been known at Bristol only by a few persons, and that slightly, except by Beadon, who he knew was long since dead; and was himself so changed in person that those amongst the few persons who knew him best would not recognize him. They would live, his wife would insist upon living, in strictest seclusion; and as to legal liability, he might laugh at that. The payment, with compound interest, of the two thousand pounds odd to the Assignees of the Tracy estate—nothing more. Tut! He had often thought of doing so anonymously, and upon arriving in England might confidentially arrange the bagatelle through a solicitor. Yes, they would go to England—to Clifton, since his wife had set her heart upon it; and without delay, too; for Constance, in her sixth year, though pretty healthy, was fast nearing the fatal boundary line.

On the evening of the day this resolution was taken, Tracy came suddenly upon a man lurking near his house, who, seeing him, after one parting scowl of deadliest hate, hurried off. The man was "Philippe," left behind at Malta; and, as he alleged, defrauded of his rightful dues. Having discovered the whereabouts of his former patron, Master Philippe made his appearance in the Brazils, and urged his claim with savage vehemence upon Tracy. Whether it was that Tracy's fiery temper resented the manner of the application, or that he really believed the man to have no rightful claim upon his purse, he sternly refused compliance. A violent altercation ensued, which ended by Philippe springing, knife in hand, upon Tracy. He was foiled: Tracy leapt aside from the blow, and without availing himself of the "bowie," as it is now called, which almost every man habitually carried about him, seized Philippe's arm, mastered him, dragged him away, and gave him into custody. He was tried for the murderous assault, found guilty, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. That imprisonment, Tracy remembered, must have expired a few days previously. This incident—meeting Philippe so near his house—did not dwell upon Tracy's mind. The enmity, open or concealed, of twenty Philippes, would not have caused him a moment's uneasiness.

The preparations for departure were hurried on; in a few days they would embark at Bahia for London. There was no time to be lost, he was advised, for the mother's sake, even more than for the child's, though the little Constance showed symptoms of drooping health. His wife's nervous system was so shattered that nothing but a change of scene, the sea-voyage, her native air, and the strong belief that in the climate of England her last remaining little one might be saved, afforded her a chance of rallying. The slightest additional shock might prove instantly fatal.

In the meanwhile, almost constant exercise in the open air was advised for the child; and one favourite mode with pretty gentle Constance herself was taking air and exercise in a small coracle, or punt, under the care of

a devoted, careful negro-slave—her father, who had lately seldom lost sight of her, watching from the abrupt shore which overlooked the deep, calmly-blue, waters.

He was thus occupied one bright, warm evening, and was about to shout to the negro, who had moved some trifling distance farther off than usual, to return ashore, when his keen glance detected what seemed to be the head of a man—of a strong swimmer, rising for a moment to breathe at the surface, and again disappearing. A few moments, and his suspicion became certainty. The head again rose to the surface—the face was Philippe's—rose to the surface close to the tiny coracle, which, the next moment, turns over, and child and negro are precipitated into the sea! There is happily no fear of the little one being drowned. The black, who swims like a duck, grasps, holds up the child clear of the water with one hand, and shouting triumphantly, strikes boldly for the shore. The negro's shout is echoed by a few persons who witnessed the accident, the cause of which they could not conjecture; not by Tracy, who hurriedly flings off his coat and shoes, places his bright bowie between his fiercely-clasped teeth, whilst his fiery eyes, through which flash all the roused devil of his nature, search the surface of the water for the re-appearance of that detested head.

A cry of horror from the lookers-on! The fins of a shark, darting with an arrow's swiftness towards the negro and child, glance in the evening light. They are lost—their horrible fate is inevitable! Not so! That instinctive cry of sympathetic horror had scarcely escaped their lips, when Tracy is seen to leap off the bluff, and strike the waters, between the terrible monster and his child. The splash arrests the motion of the shark, which the next moment darts at his new prey—misses it! Tracy dives at the instant beneath the creature, seizes it underneath—it was a male—with one iron hand—with the other stabs, rips up the sea-devil. The fight, struggle rather, is furious but brief; and two minutes have not passed when the shark turns up its white belly in the bloody water—dead!

A burst of triumph from the spectators hails the father's astounding victory! The child and negro are safe on land—Tracy himself is also safe; but why is he swimming with such fierce vigour to a distant part of the shore, his knife, now dripping red, between his teeth? Ah! he sees what they do not—the head of the man-shark, Philippe, re-appearing every alternate minute or so above the surface of the sea. Tracy comes up with him hand over hand; again dives—again the bowie-knife does its dreadful work; and the water thereabout is also dyed with blood. Quickly afterwards Tracy has landed, and is hastening to where his child, the negro, and the excited lookers-on, await him. He gives rapid, earnest directions, that no one shall inform his wife of what has happened, then hurries with the child to the nearest medical officer, who promptly administers an anodyne; and all for the time has ended happily.

Embarked at last for England in the stout ship "Medora," with a fair wind, and canopied by a summer sky, Hope tremblingly revived in the yearning mother's heart. Fragile little Constance, as soon as the transient effect of but a slight attack of *maladie de mer* had passed away, rapidly radiated into more robust life; a healthy colour dawned upon her delicate cheeks; a livelier brightness gleamed in her sweet eyes. "The mercy of God is infinite," murmured the wife, bending over the child, and tenderly watching the gradual coming on of a placid, evenly-breathing slumber, which she knew to be the best assurance that the failing springs of life were gathering tone and strength. "The mercy of God is infinite! Our darling will be saved—saved for her father's sake, not mine—oh, not for mine! The Lord hath given—the Lord hath taken away. Not all!—not all! He leaves me, even me, this precious one. Blessed be His holy Name!

The voyage was safely accomplished. The "Medora," brought up in the King's Roads, Bristol, on a fine, clear, fresh autumn morning: all well; Mrs. Smith and her daughter surprisingly so.

At about noon on the morrow the family were out upon the Clifton Downs in quest of a suitable residence. The delight of Mrs. Smith, at finding herself once more amid the well-remembered haunts of her childhood, was girlish in its joyousness. The untimely winter of her life had passed away; the time of the singing of birds had come again; of the sweet bird especially carolling in bul-bul snatches by her side; partaker, by sympathy, of her mother's joyousness. Alas! alas!

They quickly made choice of a charming villa, applications to rent which, a printed bill informed them, were to be made to a solicitor, whose address was subjoined. The woman in charge of the house said it belonged to a wealthy lady of the name of Charlton.

Passing by one of the villas, Mrs. Smith observed the words, "Mrs. Tregothick," engraved on the door-plate.

"Mrs. Tregothick!" she impulsively exclaimed: "an old, sterling friend and relative of mine, John, though somewhat stern and formal: at least she used to be. We will call upon her." And Mrs. Smith hurriedly knocked at the door—regretting instantly that she had done so. Mrs. Tregothick was a strict Roman Catholic, rigid to asceticism in her religious observances.

"John," said the wife, "it may be as well that you do not see Mrs. Tregothick till I—till I, have explained."

John agreed—said he would go into an opposite hotel, whence he would forthwith despatch a note to Mrs. Charlton's solicitor. So saying, he went quickly off. Would he had stayed but two minutes longer!

They must have been observed from the window, for he door opened suddenly—savagely, so to speak. Mrs. Smith, with the child in her

hand, made one or two steps within the passage. No further! The gaunt figure—the stone-white, stern face—the scorn-flashing eyes—the repudiating, waving-back gesture of Mrs. Tregothick, arrested, transfixed her, into a scarcely-breathing statue, as might have done the sight of a new Gorgon.

“Approach not! Come not near me!” exclaimed the excited bigot. “Profane not this threshold, Constance Gower—purjured nun; who, as I hear from your Uncle Arnold, have been joined together in Satanic nuptials with a murderous ruffian—a sacrilegious pirate! I thought I knew all, God forsaken, God-doomed wretch; but now see,” continued the fanatical virago, “that a child of shame—of the devil—has been born of the accursed union. Out of my house! I say, children of perdition—both of you!” And the infuriated wretch pushed the morally-paralyzed wife—pushed her, and her child, out of the house, with such violence that they stumbled, and fell prone upon the steps. When aid came, it was found that blood—not much—had surged through the wife’s pale lips, and that the child’s skull had been injured by striking against the edge of one of the steps.

They were something better the next day: the child, who continued partially insensible, not much. And the mother, when her husband left the room, would continue to murmur, as she passed her own cold, damp hand over her child’s brow, and through her again lank, drooping hair.—“God’s judgment—God’s judgment! The sins of the mother visited upon the children, Kyrie Eleison.”

Mr. James Charlton, who was spending vacation at Clifton, undertook at his mother’s request—her solicitor being absent from Bristol—to see a Mr. Smith, who was desirous of immediately renting a house she had to let; and James Charlton forthwith proceeded to the hotel where Mr. Smith was staying, for that purpose. He returned in a very excited state.

“Describe again, mamma,” he said, “the ruby ring, and its peculiar setting, which once belonged to your father—and was in the casket carried away by—by him who was drowned?”

Mrs. Charlton did so, minutely.

“By heavens, Mother, that ring is, at this moment, upon this Mr. John Smith’s finger. I will swear it is—there can be no mistake about it.”

“Smith! John Smith!” said Mrs. Charlton. “The name is certainly a very common one—but it is as certainly, I now recall to mind, that of the only passenger who escaped drowning when the *Ariadne* was wrecked.”

“True! I will go this instant and insist upon knowing how Mr. John Smith obtained it.”

“I will go with you,” said Mrs. Charlton; “you are hot, hasty, and may be mistaken.”

When they reached the hotel, Tracy was in the bed-chamber, tenderly

ministering to his wife and child. They were still in a very weak, precarious state. The physician had directed that they should be kept in the strictest seclusion and quiet. Their lives, he said, hung upon a thread, which, however, by proper treatment might be happily and lastingly strengthened.

"Mr. Charlton must see me upon important business, if only for a minute," said Tracy, repeating the message brought him by a servant. "Very well; I will be with him immediately. I shall scarcely be gone a minute, loves," he added, kissing his wife and child.

Fatal minute, in which a world crumbled into ruin at his feet; life, and all which it inherits, vanished for ever. Arthur Tracy and his wife Lydia confront each other—she, paralysed with astonishment; he, dumb—his brain whirling with wordless terror and dismay.

The lady first recovered the use of speech, and a storm of passionate execration was hurled at him by both mother and son—*his* son—he answering not a word. He could not have done so to save *her* life—the life of Constance, hearkening in the adjoining chamber—miserable man!—to all that was passing!

One of the folding doors opens, and in totters Constance in her nightdress, herself whiter than it. He mechanically springs towards Constance with outstretched arms, into which she falls with a bubbling, inarticulate cry—her last on earth!

A sadder, more impressive scene than that which early the next morning startled the awe-struck woman-servant who first entered the death-chamber, never crossed mortal sight. Constance and her child lay in calm death-slumber, embraced in each other's arms. By the bed-side knelt the husband, his hands clasped in his wife's. He replied not to the woman's low-toned question—had not been disturbed by her hushed foot-fall. She approached nearer to him, spoke louder, louder—touched, shook him—strove to unclasp his hands; then peered into his bowed face, and knew by the blind, stony stare of the fixed eyes, that he, too, was dead!

Yes, dead! It was whispered afterwards, and believed, by his own act; but that fact was not legally established at the inquest.

The play is over: Let us depart!

PNEUMATIC DESPATCH.

NATURE abhors a vacuum; and, where one exists, does its best, by the pressure of the atmosphere, to put an immediate end to so abnormal a condition. In these volunteering days, when every man has his rifle at his elbow, this aversion of our great parent may be simply demonstrated. Wrap tow steeped in oil round the head of the ramrod till it fits accurately into the bore of the weapon, and then insert it at the muzzle. If, by applying the mouth to the nipple, the air in the barrel be now drawn out, a vacuum will be caused, and the pressure of the atmosphere, acting on the outside of the ramrod head, will instantly force the rod to the end of the barrel. If the hammer be then allowed to fall on the nipple so as to shut out air in that direction, it will be found that this same atmospheric pressure is so perceptible as to prevent the withdrawal of the ramrod from the gun without the exercise of considerable strength. The difficulty must, however, in this case be attributed rather to the awkwardness of the apparatus than to the actual force to be overcome; for, as the weight of the atmosphere is but 15lbs. on the square inch, the ramrod, from its small superficies, cannot have to sustain a pressure of more than 5lbs.

Let the rifle barrel be extended to the length intervening between two specified places, and increase its diameter sufficiently to admit whatever is to be sent along the tube, and we have at once a groundwork for atmospheric propulsion. Travelling by this means was tried experimentally some years before the locomotive took charge of its living burden. As early as 1810, Medhurst, a Danish engineer of eminence, recommended that pipes of comparatively small size should be laid down for the transmission of letters. They were to be attached to a piston fitting into the pipe; and, on the air beyond the piston being exhausted by an air-pump, the piston would rush forward at great speed so long as the vacuum in front of it lasted.

The next invention was Vallance's, of which a working model was exhibited at Brighton in 1827. His proposition was to have a tube similar in principle to Medhurst's, but six feet in diameter, and to make the piston a travelling-carriage, in which passengers should sit. On this system many people were drawn along his tube; yet, whatever its capabilities for locomotion might have been, the travellers of that day had not had experience even of ordinary railway tunnels—too common now with us to excite a momentary fear—and could not bring themselves to tolerate the idea of performing a whole journey in a close pipe, without light, and without communication with the exterior. Such a system might have answered for goods: but was—then at least—out of the question for men and women. In order, therefore, to make atmospheric propulsion available practically, it was necessary to find some method of transferring to passengers and freight outside the tube the motion of the piston, which itself must obviously be within it.

The difficulty was solved by an American gentleman named Pinkus, who

patented, in 1835, what he called the Pneumatic Railway. His invention was taken up by Messrs. Clegg and Samuda, of London, who made some improvements in the design, and brought capital to aid in bringing it practically before the world. To these gentlemen belongs, therefore, whatever credit attached to the Atmospheric Railways; and, although in the history of science that project must be included in the chapter of failures, we must not on that account refuse to accord them very great credit indeed for a spirited attempt—on which they staked large sums of money—to introduce an entirely strange source of locomotion, which, had it succeeded, would have rivalled steam on every railway. Merit cannot always command success; nor is failure universally the sign of a weakly-devised scheme. The idea of the atmospheric system was so plausible, and gave such fair promise, that even Robert Stephenson—comprehensive and instantaneous as was his grasp of a subject—was unable to decide whether its good or evil

attributes preponderated, until, after seeing it work on the Dalkey line, he had laboriously sifted every particular of its actual operation.



Fig. 1.

covered by a leather flap-valve, fastened on one side and free to rise on

the other, though, when unused, kept as close down as possible, and well lubricated with grease to preserve it in an air-tight condition. Attached to the piston (see Fig. 2) was a perpendicular piston-rod, connecting it with a railway carriage running on rails above parallel to the atmospheric tube. The piston-rod raised the valve as it passed; a roller behind

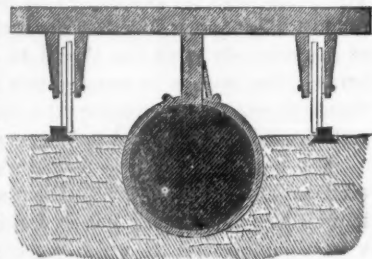


Fig. 2.

immediately replaced it in its former position; and another apparatus dropped a fresh supply of the lubricating compound. The piston extended sufficiently far in front of the piston-rod (Fig. 3) to prevent the raising of the leather valve admitting air into the exhausted portion of the tube; but a lever was provided to enable the conductor to lift the valve in front of the train, so as, in case of accident, to decrease or destroy the vacuum, and annihilate the motive power. Now, the pressure of the atmosphere on a circular disc 40 inches in diameter is about $8\frac{1}{2}$ tons; and, if a deduction be made for friction, any dead-weight less than the remainder would be overcome by the action of this piston. With the additional assistance of light iron wheels rolling easily on smooth

metal rails, of course a far heavier burden than this mere dead-weight could be propelled at great speed by the same pressure on the disc.

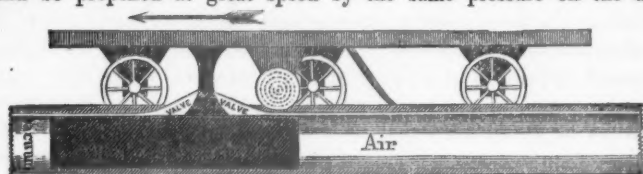


Fig. 3.

Theoretically the plan was perfect, and seemed especially adapted to hilly districts, where economy demanded steep gradients and sharp curves. Such a line was presented admirably between Kingstown and Dalkey, in Ireland, and there, accordingly, the atmospheric tube was first tried. A speed of 30 to 40 miles an hour was easily procured, and the trains went over the hills in capital style. Financial and mechanical difficulties appeared, however, from the very beginning. The tube, when exhausted, persisted in leaking slightly at its joints, and greatly at the valve, where the lubricating oil dried up from the sun's heat, and the leather warped. Then the expense of working was also found more considerable than had been anticipated; and the necessity of having duplicate exhausting engines at each end with steam constantly up, lest the failure of one should paralyze the whole traffic, added a heavy item to the capital already invested. The more important tubes laid down on the same principle from London to Croydon, and on the South Devon Railway, with exhausting engines every three miles, only tended to confirm the experience of the Dalkey Company. These exhausting engines cost a great sum for maintenance: a large machine of many horses power constantly at work, and a similar engine with steam up ready to work in case of need, might well be thought formidable obstacles to a dividend. Passengers were sufficiently plentiful; but the cost of conveyance so far exceeded that by locomotive engines, while the derangements were so frequent and provoking, that all the Companies supporting the principle were at length compelled reluctantly to abandon it, as wholly incapable of contending with the cheaper and more certain locomotive. The only Atmospheric Railway which survived for a short time this general failure, was a working model which many of my readers, who were juveniles then, will remember to have traversed at the Polytechnic with boyish glee, and not without some danger of an upset into the adjoining canal. Ah! the Polytechnic was a real Boys' Paradise then, and had not degenerated to its present hybrid state, where Marionettes are as likely to be met with as working steam-engines, and where gaily-dressed dolls rival the diving-bell in attraction.

For several years the question of using the atmosphere for a motive power lay dormant, until, a few seasons ago, the Electric and International Telegraph Company resorted to it as a speedy method of communicating between the head office in Lothbury and the branch offices at the Stock

Exchange and Cornhill. Messages from all parts of Europe, which arrived at the head office, and had to be immediately forwarded to these branch destinations, were so numerous, and so dependent for their value on the most rapid possible transmission, that they would have required a large number of wires connecting the stations, and a considerable staff of telegraphists to work them. The whole of this extra annual expense is saved by the employment of a small Pneumatic Despatch tube, attached to the piston, in which is a felt bag capable of containing a large bundle of written messages as received in Lothbury. A few strokes in the cylinder of an air-pump suffice to exhaust the tube, and the piston, when set at liberty, is quickly shot to the other end; scarcely more time elapsing in the delivery of the messages than would have been necessary for their despatch downstairs and across the road at Lothbury.

This tube reaches a total length of about three-quarters of a mile, and has been found perfectly successful—saving time and labour in a remarkable degree. The great element of its answering, as compared with Messrs. Clegg and Samuda's Atmospheric Railway, is undoubtedly the fact that the entire work is carried on *within*, and that, consequently, there is no need of any valve or communication with the air outside. Under this condition the preservation of a vacuum becomes merely dependent on the joints in the pipe being properly secured; and they must be sorry navvies indeed who are unable to lay down and join pipes so that they shall duly exclude the air.

Availing themselves of the principle so successful in this last instance, the Pneumatic Despatch Company propose to apply it on a larger scale to the relief of the streets of London from much of the parcel and mail-cart traffic. Their design is to lay tubes under the main thoroughfares, to establish suitable exhausting engines, and to run frequent trains of trucks between different parts of the metropolis. For this purpose their tube is to be no longer the small pipe of the Electric Telegraph Company, but a tunnel-shaped channel of cast-iron (as shown in section in Fig. 4), 2ft. 9in. in height, and averaging 2ft. 5in. in width. Rails will be fixed in the bottom corners for the passage of the trucks with as little friction as possible. The trucks themselves are iron vehicles, ingeniously formed so that their bodies shall occupy



Fig. 4.

the whole interior of the tube, while the wheels are sunk into the sides, and have free play on the rails below, without interfering in any way with the complete filling of the tube by the carriage.

The success of this scheme, in a mechanical sense, has been amply proved at the experimental works which the Company have instituted on the river margin adjoining the Battersea station of the Brighton Railway. For just a quarter of a mile by the side of the stream may now be observed a black, sinuous object, more like a ribbed worm than anything else, some-

times completely buried, then rising a few feet, and again curving out of sight. This is their experimental tube, of the size which the actual apparatus is intended to have. At its Nine Elms end, in a small shed, is the steam-engine for working it, accompanied with barometers to show the pressure exerted within the tube, and other necessary appliances. To those fond of elegant machinery it must be no small treat to be permitted to view the occasional operation of this remarkable machine. The pipe is so laid as to represent at different parts the curves and inclines of leading London streets; the slope of Snow Hill occurring in one part, that of Holborn Hill in another. Several curves of more or less sharpness are inserted to prove the capability of the trucks rounding them without hinderance—a feat they perform in a really marvellous manner in the case of the last and sharpest curve, which is made with a radius of no more than 40 feet.

Resort is not had to the air-pump for the exhaustion of this tube, the means adopted being simply the centrifugal motion of the air in a large hollow wheel, or double fan, revolving rapidly, and driving everything, air and dust included, from the centre towards the circumference. The action of this apparatus will be best understood by a reference to the annexed diagram (Fig. 5), where A is the end of the tube at which the carriages are expected to arrive; leading from this, a tributary pipe (B) carries the air to C, one of two circular openings forming the axis of the hollow wheel D. E is a valve for severing, when necessary, the connection between the tube A and the exhausting wheel D. This wheel consists of two sheets of iron, each 21 feet in diameter, three feet apart at their centre, but approaching at the circumference to within a few inches of each other. It receives a rotary and very rapid motion through the

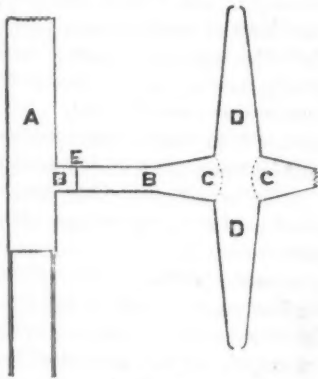


Fig. 5.

agency of an exquisite little high-pressure steam-engine as ever left the factory of Messrs. Boulton and Watt. "She's a sweet little thing!" said the engineer in charge; "we can work her to a'most any power:" a capability which, we may hope, for the sake of spectators, that worthy mechanic does not test too severely. The ordinary power, however, of the engine is stated to be 15 horses.

On the end of A being closed by an iron door, and communication opened with the hollow wheel, if the latter be set in motion, the air at its centre is by centrifugal force driven in successive whirls to the circumference, whence it is thrown forth into the atmosphere. This action is very apparent, even with slow revolutions of the wheel, if a

handkerchief be held at any point near the open exterior of the disc; and when the rotation is rapid, the draught is so great that it is even difficult for a man to stand his ground against it. As the air originally at the centre is forced outwards, a fresh supply is sucked in from B, and through it from A, until, with very little delay, the whole tube is exhausted, or at least subjected to a partial vacuum. When the engine is working at its full power the disc is able to exhaust the tube now laid at Battersea (a quarter of a mile) in from 20 to 30 seconds. Immediately the end of one truck is inserted in the farther extremity of the tube, it begins to be sucked towards the exhausting apparatus at the near end, and, together with other carriages attached to it, travels subterraneously to its destination at the rate of about 25 miles an hour.

Let us now station ourselves in the engine-house, with the great revolving fan creating such a whirlwind that the sound of the voice is entirely drowned in the roar. The attendants are watching a signal, which is moved when the train reaches a point about thirty yards away: the instant that signal records its approach, the valve at E (Fig. 5) is shut, while the trap-door closing the end of the tube is opened, and the trucks, having accomplished the last few yards through the momentum previously acquired, emerge gently from their dark route into the open air. The sensation of seeing these curious vehicles appear, suddenly and quietly, in the midst of the deafening tornado produced by the revolving fan, is very strange: they glide, seemingly without noise, one after another from their narrow opening, much as a worm might slip stealthily from its hole amid a drenching shower.

Not far different, either, from a worm's speedy withdrawal into his slimy burrow is the appearance of a train of trucks starting on their journey from the opposite end of the experimental tube. Standing in the open to receive their imaginary load, they are pushed forward till the end of the first enters the tunnel and fills it. At a given signal the suction from the other extremity commences; one by one the trucks disappear, and in a few seconds are lost in the black abyss of pipe, through which the eye seeks in vain to penetrate. Though gone from view, they are, however, by no means out of hearing, for the noise these iron, springless carriages make as they run, and—to judge by the sound—jolt over the rails, is very considerable. The long, cylindrical tube is, moreover, so admirable an acoustic conductor, that even words spoken at one end are distinctly audible, a quarter of a mile off, at the other, provided, of course, the channel be empty. As the train reaches the point where the exhausting process is stopped, a report is heard at the end whence it started similar to, and as loud as, the explosion of a pistol. The cause of this report, unlike any heard at the opposite end, where the action really producing it takes place, has not yet been satisfactorily explained.

So rare an opportunity of testing the sensations of the body under peculiarly unpropitious circumstances was not to be neglected. Who

should say what physiological phenomena, what extraordinary experiences, might not be evolved from being shot—feet foremost—through a dark pipe, in which, if anything happened, there would be no possibility of helping one's self? Alas! there were no such results; the journey was accomplished safely, and with no stronger effect than a considerable shaking. Lying at length on a mattress in the bottom of a truck, a cloak is thrown over the passenger to preserve him from the dust, with which, perhaps from the tube being now but rarely used, the tunnel is disagreeably filled. His conveyance enters its prison; the noise is abundant; the jolting no less so—about what might be felt if lying on the floor of a railway carriage, but less than that of an omnibus over a paved road—the idea of time taken in the journey, of course, exaggerated; otherwise no remarkable sensation, beyond one of extreme delight at again reaching the light of heaven. The Pneumatic Despatch is certainly not the mode of travelling a man with plenty of time at his disposal would select; but where speed is greatly an object, it might be welcome to many—in the absence of a more orthodox railway—as a means of evading the delays of crowded streets. I may mention here that it is part of the design of the Company to carry passengers—*if they will go*.

The first operation which the Company proposes to itself is, the establishment of connecting links between the General Post Office and the several Head Offices of the Postal Districts, with intermediate stations about every half mile. The Western Central Office, in Bloomsbury, is intended to be the earliest placed in communication with head-quarters. If these tubes answer—as it is confidently anticipated by the projectors that they will—the system will be gradually extended, first to the railway termini, next to the metropolitan suburbs, and lastly, perhaps, by longer routes to more distant towns.

That the arrangements will give satisfaction, in a mechanical point of view, cannot be doubted: how far their success will extend as a pecuniary speculation is a question for very careful consideration. The carts and vans used for postal purposes in the metropolis cost £11,000 annually, and this sum the Directors would reckon upon receiving. The railway small parcels are computed to produce £38,000 a year to the agents delivering them: of this, too, the company calculates on taking to itself a handsome share. Then there is the internal delivery of parcels and small packages through the Parcels Delivery Company, the carriers, the porters, and a hundred other channels, from which a fair revenue must almost certainly be derived, especially as the Pneumatic Despatch Company intend assuming the functions of commissionaires, in addition to those of carriers. In their estimate the Directors would add to all this the profit arising from conveyance of passengers. What that gain may be I decline to calculate, as I also decline to receive with any faith their calculations on the subject. Working men may, as they expect, avail themselves of this means of transporting themselves from their suburban homes to

building or other business in different parts of London; and men of all grades may possibly be glad at times of so rapid a mode of reaching their occupation or their pleasure; but there must certainly be the contrary chance that few or none will be disposed to trust themselves to a journey in a recumbent, helpless posture, through a dark, cavernous hole, subject, in idea at least, to invisible misfortunes. That such objections may be unreasonable I do not deny; for, in point of fact, the danger will be infinitely less than that encountered in a railway tunnel, and, indeed, the way of travelling generally would be as safe as any rapid description of motion devised by man well could be. Collisions are impossible, from the very principle of the invention. A break-down would involve no worse catastrophe than delay and temporary imprisonment in a dark cell; for the exhaustion of air is never sufficient to cause suffocation, and the trucks could in a short time be pushed or drawn by mechanical force to the nearest station. *Ce n'est que le premier pas qui coûte*, and it is perfectly possible that after once testing the anticipated discomfort of a pneumatic subterranean journey, passengers might be willing to submit to the darkness, the jolting, and disagreeable sensations, for the sake of such speedy exit at a distant point.

All these are sources of income necessarily difficult to compute until some section of the work be really open. On the other hand, the cost of apparatus and construction must be heavy, and shareholders should carefully balance accounts between probable investments and probable returns before any large outlay is incurred. Still, all must wish well to this very ingenious, and, indeed, beautiful design. It would, if boldly carried out, effectually relieve London streets of much troublesome light traffic, and would afford at once to shopkeepers and customers the advantage of immediate communications in all directions. This generation will indeed have seen strange things in its days: Railways spread throughout the land, subjugating fire and water to the service of man: Electricity raised i visibly from the earth, and only allowed to return to it after surrendering him its power as his obedient familiar, bearing his messages with celerity that would astonish Puck himself, albeit that sprite could

"Put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes:"

Even Earth has been called to account, and a precious and useful metal evolved from smelted clay. Lastly, to complete the victory over the ancient elements, Air is made to subserve the purposes of commerce, and to rival the most agile steel in its submissive power of producing motion.

AT A PANTOMIME.

BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

A KINDLY sensible man on the shady side of forty will find himself well repaid, at this season of the year, by investing some of his spare cash in a box at a Theatre, where a good Pantomime forms the *pièce de résistance* of the evening's banquet. It will give him a re-juvenescence that nothing else can so effectually accomplish. He may look upon the joyous little faces before him until the hard lines, which business and care may have impressed on his own, fade before the pleasant reflection of his little friends' happiness, and the thoughts that will return of past days when he also believed in a Pantomime. If we do not go back to childhood in studying a child's thoughts, we shall find the world grow older and gloomier than even we do ourselves. There is a perpetual youth springing fresh about us, and it should be welcomed as we welcome the spring.

"Pantomimes are not what they used to be! they are all *spectacle*, and no fun!" says one who can "just remember Grimaldi, sir." And is it really so? and are we to pull long faces in memory of "fun, *deceased*?" Look at our children—the girls all charmed with the Fairies, the boys radiant with laughter at the Clown. This very performance, that seems to you, old friend, so flat and tedious, will some day be quoted by them as the very perfection of joviality; and they, in their turn, will "put down" young men yet unborn, when they praise some Grimaldi to come, by assuring them that they are quite wrong, and that this class of amusement "is nothing to what it was thirty years ago—in 1862, say."

It is impossible to overstate the reality with which an imaginative child invests the Stage. To such an one the Theatre is no mere erection of bricks and mortar, but a veritable palace of enchantment, that will give reality to all which has been hitherto imperfectly guessed at in a popular story-book. Here they are delightfully destined to become personally acquainted with Cinderella and Little Red-Riding-Hood. They may shrink in terror from Tom Thumb's Giants, or see in mystic light what I once heard a little boy call, "a real *honest* Ghost!" All is new, and all is true, to them. Happy time, that knows no criticism!

To be critical over-much, to put aside much that is good, because it might be better, is an unlucky tendency in the present day. We cannot always "take the good the (managerial) gods provide us," without repining—sometimes reasonably, often capriciously. New sensations cannot be excited every year; and human ideas are of slow growth. It has taken more than two thousand years to change the Cart of *Thespis* into the Royal Italian Opera. All the wonderful combination of dress and decoration that makes the Stage so true a mirror of life, past and present, has been very slowly perfected. Authors, artists, managers, have devoted life and money to the study. When we sit so complacently in

front of the stage, how little do we think of the bodily and mental wear-and-tear of all concerned in catering for our amusement!

There is nothing produced on the stage that demands a larger variety of thought and exertion than that quaint dramatic invention—a Christmas Pantomime. It takes in all the appliances of the scenic art—demands the best labours of the machinest—taxes the ability of the costumier, and leaves no one unoccupied who can be pressed into its service. It has grown into all this importance with the growth of Stage appliances; and, now that grand “transformation scenes” are designed by men of fertile fancy, and carried out in lavish expenditure, there is nothing that theatrical art can show more gorgeous, and sometimes more tasteful, than may be witnessed in a Pantomime.

So, leaving the children to the due enjoyment of the eye, may we not a little disport the mind in thinking over the changes that have made this popular spectacle what it is, since the days when Manager Rich first taught the Town to delight their eyes with his grand shows, and his own agility as Harlequin? It would be easy to go much further than this; to speak of the pantomimists of the Roman era, who, we are told by the men of their own day, used to express anything, by action only, in the most perfect manner; but it will be enough for us to restrict ourselves to the early part of the last century, when the man arose who has been called “Inventor of the English Harlequinade.”

John Rich had a happy faculty for the concoction of Stage effects. He was Manager of Covent Garden Theatre at a time when its patented rights gave peculiar position and privilege to the holder, and he lavished his cash and his fancy over the production of Pantomimes, for which he had a great natural genius. He played himself the part of Harlequin, under the assumed name of Lun, and such was the enormous popularity attending all his efforts, that the “regular drama” was deserted by a public anxious to witness them. He was so far infatuated with his tastes, that it is said, on one occasion, when his theatre was crowded to witness a Tragedy, he could not help muttering, as he peeped at the audience through the hole in the green curtain, “What! you are there, you fools, are you? Well; much good may it do you!” When at last he gave up all reliance on Tragedy or Comedy, the success of his Pantomimic exhibitions was so great as to enable his theatre to withstand the opposed attractions of the best actors that ever adorned the English Stage. Even Garrick himself was obliged to try at rivalry, and produce a “Raree-show” at his theatre, in a vain attempt to arrest the mob who flocked to that of his opponent. Rich died, at the mature age of sixty-nine, a wealthy man, and is buried in the churchyard of Hillingdon, Middlesex, beneath an imposing monument, fitted in its character to commemorate one who had wielded a Field Marshal’s baton rather than the wooden sword of Harlequin.

Our great novelist, Henry Fielding, occasionally threw off dramatic trifles, some of them very clever satires on the public tastes of the day.

One of these was named "Pasquin," and was produced at the "little theatre in the Haymarket," in 1736. It comprised, in its strange variety of design, the rehearsal of two plays, and in one of them—"a Tragedy, called the Life and Death of Common Sense"—he has brought in Harlequin as Ambassador to Queen Ignorance, who is armed to destroy the rival after whom the Tragedy is named. He thus opens his business :—

"To you, Great Queen of Ignorance, I come,
 Ambassador from the two theatres,
 Who both congratulate you on your arrival;
 And to convince you with what hearty meaning
 They sue for your alliance, they have sent
 Their choicest treasure here as hostages,
 To be detain'd till you are well convinced
 They're not less foes to *Common Sense* than you."

The kind of hostages sent may be readily imagined; they consist of tumblers and dancers, performing dogs, and "a human creature that personates a dog so well that he might almost be taken for one."

Rich seems to have been annoyed by this attack of Fielding's. It was not his first. In "the Author's Farce," 1730, he introduces "Monsieur Pantomime" in *inferno*, with other false "tastes of the Town;" but in "Pasquin" he is more satirical, making an Author who is one of the characters exclaim :—

"After the audience have been tired with the dull works of Shakespeare, Jonson, Vanbrugh, and others, they are to be entertained with one of these Pantomimes, of which the master of the play-house, two or three painters and half a score dancing-masters, are the compilers. What these entertainments are, I need not inform you who have seen 'em; but I have often wondered how it was possible for any creature of human understanding, after having been diverted for three hours with the productions of a great genius, to sit for three more and see a set of people running about the stage after one another, without speaking one syllable, and playing several juggling tricks, which are done at Fawks's after a much better manner: and for this, Sir, the Town does not only pay additional prices, but loses several parts of their best authors, which are cut out to make room for the said farces."

Rich retaliated by bringing out a Satire, at his theatre, in reply—but it was not successful; and Fielding returned to the charge in a Burlesque on his "Fall of Phaeton," called "Tumble-down-Dick, or Phaeton in the Suds," which he dedicated to "Mr. John Lun, vulgarly called Esquire." In this he says :—

"It is to you, Sir, we owe (if not the invention, at least the bringing into a fashion) that sort of writing which you have been pleased to distinguish by the name of *Entertainment*. Your success herein—whether owing to your heels or head, I will not determine—sufficiently entitles you to all respect from the inferior dabbles in things of this sort."

A Harlequinade in dumb show is introduced in this Play; giving a very good notion of what they were at that time. Harlequin



was then the most important character, and the whole action of the Play rested with him. He played the tricks, and made the confusion which is now made by the Clown. The engraving appended will exhibit his general appearance; it is copied from a print of the period. He has no mask; but an abundant moustache; a hat that would suit a quaker, a deep falling collar, and heavy buckled shoes. The lozenge-shaped patches of which his dress is composed originated in the real ones worn by the Italian Harlequin, who was a ragged rascal when first introduced to the Stage; but whose tatters have in process of time been converted into a conventional dress of costly material.

Rich's most successful *coup de théâtre* was the production of "Harlequin Jack Sheppard," in which the motley hero went through the principal exploits of the more celebrated Newgate hero. There is a curious caricature, attributed to Hogarth, published in 1725, exhibiting Rich holding up the puppet of Harlequin in chains, as shown in this Pantomime, and affectedly invoking the Muses over his performance with the exclamation, "Assist, ye sacred Nine!" On each side are the opposition Managers, with their inventions. Booth has Jack Hall the Chimney-sweep; Wilks the figure of Punch, which he gazes on delightedly as he exclaims, "Poor Rich! faith, I pity thee!"—so sure is he of the success that will attend his comic hero.

Columbine was at this time entrusted to some foreign lady from the Italian Companies who then first attempted to gain a footing among us. Where nothing had to be said expressive, dancing did all. Our cut depicts a Columbine of that era—whose quaint costume seems identical with the Dresden-china Shepherdesses, or the fair denizens of a Versailles Arcadia; from one, or both sources, her *tout ensemble* might have been obtained.



Wilks's Punch, in his opposition Pantomime, proved a formidable rival to Rich's Harlequin. From his first introduction to England the

public always looked on him with pleasure. As a puppet he was irresistible; but when he appeared alive on the stage, doing all kinds of queer feats, he was still more attractive. Fielding makes him sing his own claims to notice thus:—

“ Whilst the Town’s brim-full of Farces,
Flocking whilst we see her asses
Thick as grapes upon a bunch,
Critics, whilst you smile on madness,
And more stupid, solemn sadness,
Sure you will not frown on Punch.”

Punch at this time was habited in a hat as broad-brimmed as that of Harlequin; and sometimes with a very high crown. The engraving exhibits his appearance when he delighted the town in the days of Queen Anne. Under the control of Powell, the famed puppet-showman, Punch achieved an equal triumph among the corps of wooden actors. Indeed, so successful was he, that the following letter of complaint from an individual injured thereby was printed in the “Spectator” of March, 1710:—



“ I have been for twenty years undersexton of the parish of St. Paul’s, Covent Garden, and have not missed tolling in to prayers six times in all these years; which office I have performed to my great satisfaction until this fortnight last past, during which time I find my congregation take the warning of my bell, morning and evening, to go to a puppet-show set forth by one

Powell under the Piazzas. By this means, I have not only lost my two best customers, whom I used to place for sixpence apiece over against Mrs. Rachel Eyebright, but Mrs. Rachel herself has gone thither also. There now appear among us none but a few ordinary people, who come to church only to say their prayers, so that I have no work worth speaking of but on Sundays. I have placed my son at the Piazzas to acquaint the ladies that the bell rings for church, and that it stands on the other side of the Garden; but they only laugh at the child!”

Powell, however, prided himself on the strict morality of his Stage, which might fairly be considered as the legitimate descendant of the old Mysteries; for his dramas were, like them, founded on Sacred story. Thus, “Noah’s Flood,” the “History of Susannah,” and the “Judgment of Solomon,” were stock pieces of his *répertoire*. But Punch was introduced in them all—he danced with his wife in Noah’s Ark, entering it

with the polite salutation, "Hazy weather, Master Noah!" His appearance before Solomon is thus alluded to by Swift:—

"Observe, the audience is in pain,
While Punch is hid behind the scene;
But when they hear his rusty voice,
With what impatience they rejoice!
And then they value not two straws
How Solomon decides the cause;
Which the true mother—which pretender."

Both Punch and Harlequin may be traced back to the older Vice who delighted the lovers of the drama before Shakespeare wrote. The battle between the Vice and Satan was a conflict that all delighted to view. Harlequin's wand certainly had its prototype in that borne by the Vice, as alluded to by the Clown in "Twelfth Night,"—

"Who with dagger of lath,
In his rage and his wrath,
Cries 'Ah, ah!' to the Devil."

Harlequin's wand is the flat flexible sword with which the Vice belaboured all opponents, to make the groundlings laugh, who always relished such antics. Harlequin and Punch were both great talkers on the old Stage—the former a blundering joker; the latter a satirical wit, who dared to make remarks on men, manners, and even Government, after the fashion of Pasquin. Punch still talks, but Harlequin has become a bespangled nonentity. Addison, in his "Travels in Italy" tells us that there, "Harlequin's part was made up of blunders and absurdities; he is to mistake one name for another, to forget his errands, to stumble over queens, and to run his head against every post that comes in his way." There was a famous Harlequin in the latter part of the reign of Louis XIV. named Dominique, who, being a man of wit, elevated the part from this grotesque, ignorant character, into a smart satirical one. He introduced, or rather invented, the character of Pierrot, who was supposed to be his blundering servant, and appears to be the origin of the English Clown, who now combines in himself both characters.

Ruzzante, an author and actor who flourished on the Italian stage about 1530, is the reputed inventor of Pantaloon. His name is said by some authors to be derived from the watch-word of the Venetians, "*Pianta leone*," and the character a

burlesque on their pomposity. He was a grotesque old fellow. "The lean and slipper'd Pantaloon" is well characterized in Shakespeare's



words; but in the succeeding century he was younger and more active. Witness the copy here given of Riccoboni's figure. He is here most remarkable for a certain pompously grotesque manner; an inflated dignity and attempt at grace. His ample moustachios and pointed beard give him the aspect of a *vieux militaire*, and his manners seem those of Captain Bobadil. Now he is, with us, a mere senile recipient of the practical jokes, the kicks and thumps, of the Clown. As the genius of Rich made Harlequin great, so that of Grimaldi made the Clown even more famous. It is due to his strong sense of grotesque humour that the mere fool of the Pantomime became its only "telling" part. Grimaldi had the power of conceiving the most irresistibly comic stage-business. His invention never flagged, and year after year some new whim set the theatre in a roar. He would concoct all kinds of queer "tricks," and produce the oddest and most unlooked-for combinations from the various articles apparently brought by accident on the stage. Thus he would construct a tandem from a cradle elevated on wooden rollers, the foot-board being a dust-pan; the rail round the seat, gridirons; the lamps, paper-lanterns from an apple-stall. Sometimes



he would metamorphose Pantaloon as completely as Harlequin changed the scenery. Here is a copy of a once popular print, representing him with the Nondescript in the Pantomime of

the "Red Dwarf;" the creature being composed over the prostrate Pantaloon from a lion's skin, an ass's head, bear's paws, eagle's wings, and a fish's tail.

The addition of scenic effects and pleasing music to Grimaldi's fun, proved an irresistible attraction to pantomimic entertainments; and the extraordinary success which attended one of them, "Mother Goose,"—(concocted by T. Dibdin, and Farley, the actor)—has been recorded by Byron, in his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," as well as the merits of Greenwood's scenery. It was played more than a hundred and fifty nights consecutively; brought more than twenty thousand pounds to the Treasury of Covent Garden Theatre; and was often reproduced as "a stock-piece," at all theatres, metropolitan and provincial, for a long series of years.

In this slight literary sketch it is not intended to do more than indicate a train of thought and inquiry that may result from reflecting on the past history of the Stage. There is a key to a nation's character in all its popular amusements; and surely the harmless folly of a Pantomime is

more laudable than the cruelties of a bull-fight. If pantomimes have become less uproariously comical than they were in the days of Grimaldi, we must remember they are more refined in all their adjuncts. Scenery and decoration are sometimes lavished upon them in a manner that our forefathers would have scarcely conceived to be possible. There is a peculiar genius at work in this way also; and the inventions of Mr. William Beverley are such gorgeous realizations of fairy-land, that "children of a larger growth" are often as much astonished by their artistic beauty as the younger ones are mentally entranced, by this, their real, visit to fairy-land—for such is the theatre to them, and there they are, while gazing at his stage-glories.

Abler pens than that now employed have descanted on the thought and labour occupying so many minds and hands at this season of the year, in the production of these annual entertainments; and have taught us to think more seriously over the career of the "poor player," who works so hard day and night for our amusement. All the ease and smoothness of action that we witness, in the evening, is obtained by wearisome rehearsal in a dark, damp, foggy theatre, in the day. After that, tired Clowns may get a hurried dinner, and prepare to go through a heavy amount of hard labour till midnight, and then be up and at it, rehearsing again in the morning, till all works well. Who thinks that a Clown is ever dismal, or suffering from cold and illness? or that Pantaloon may in reality be an elderly man not properly able to be buffeted as he must be, but obliged to bear it for the support of a wife and family? Harlequin and Columbine, too, may have their troubles, and dance in gauze and spangles with a heavy heart. But we need take no gloomy view of the position of any one of the quaint group; only let us think kindly, if not gratefully, toward members of a most hard-working profession, and dismiss them as Don Quixote did the players he encountered on their road to a village where they were to act a solemn morality at the feast of Corpus Christi. Don Quixote, who in all his aberration of intellect and eccentricity of action always exhibited the kindly feeling and right-heartedness of a true gentleman, takes his leave of the strollers in the courteous words:—"Peace be with you, good people! Go, and act your play; and if there be any thing in which I may be of service to you, command me; for I will do it readily, and with a good-will, having been from my youth a great admirer of masques and theatrical representations."

MEMORIES OF IRISH CHARACTER.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

No. I.

MOLLY CANDY.

"WHISHT darlin'!—sure it isn't meeself that's in it!"

"But, Molly——!"

"Oh, mercy on us, won't you whisht? I'm *not* Molly—don't ye see I'm not? Sorra an eye but your own bright ones would have found me out; and how did ye know I was Molly? Ain't I the very moral of Larry Lynch—his big coat, an' his caubeen, an' his pipe? Sure I am! Oh, Miss, darlin'; is there a thing ye ever wished for I didn't bring ye? The beautiful pup, dear, all the way from Ennis-corthy, and as fine a bowl of tadpoles that ye wanted for ye'r pond as ever was fished out of the ditches at Clonmines; and wasn't I ate to bits wid the young aigle I carried every fut on my back from Ballyteague? And oh, the monkey that the minister sent ye! Was there a bit of my cakes or candies she didn't destroy, besides pulling every hair out of my head?"

"Not *every* hair, Molly, for there is a mass of bright black hair hanging at this moment over your left shoulder, and *that* told me you were Molly Candy, *not* that good-for-nothing Larry Lynch."

"Oh, then bad luck to the hair intirely! If I was owner of a sissars in the world, that isn't rusted with the rain, or a knife that would cut, I'd have had it off this blessed mornin', that I would! Oh, praise and glory! Wasn't it lucky ye saw it? for Larry is carroty! And see here Miss, didn't I pluck every feather out o' the red cock's tail, and peel them into a friz, and sow them into Larry's caubeen, just the sign of the colour, under the ins and outs of the brim? And his mother said it was illigant. I suppose Miss," she continued, looking earnestly at the white-frocked, dainty little lady of those days, who had just entered her teens, "I suppose you haven't sich a thing as a reaping-hook about ye, that would sweep off mee hair in a minute, or a piece of string that would tie it on the top of mee head, and keep it from roamin'?"

I certainly had neither "reaping-hook" nor "string," but I unpinned the riband from my bonnet, and presented it to her. "Oh," she said, "think o' that! faith then I'll have more silk on mee head than I'll have on mee back. Well, darlin' Miss—only I'll never ax *you* to come forward and say you saw Larry Lynch on this spot of ground this blessed summer mornin' No, dear! I don't expect the likes of that from *you*; but if ever your poor Molly plased you with what she sung, said, or did, remember it. Oh, for the Lord's sake, remember it! and no matter what you hear, never let on you saw *ME* playing at Larry. I never did it

before Miss, and I don't think I'll ever do it agin for man or mortal. Now, darlin', you'll remember! Ah, won't ye? I'll take the riban', and God bless ye for it, and maybe it will be the savin' o' Larry's life."

"Molly," I answered, with shameful thoughtlessness, "I would rather please you than save Larry's life."

"Oh, Miss, machree! don't turn your tongue to the likes o' that! Don't! he's such a blackguard that I'd like he'd have time for repentance. I don't think the county this blessed minute houlds a wilder or a more tare-an-ounty boy than Larry Lynch; he's *bittther bad*, and that's the thruth! but think of his poor mother, whose hope is he'll get out of the counthry dacent to his uncle in America, without putting the Governmint to the cost of his travelling expinses."

"Molly Candy," whose real name was Mary Devereux, was the delight of every dwelling, from the gentleman's "big house" to the humblest cabin. She travelled the country dealing largely in "sweets," and the sweets of those days in Ireland consisted of great squares of a bitter abomination called horehound—believed in as a specific against coughs,—twisted canes of transparent barley-sugar,—gingerbread, generally in "nuts," and ridges, except indeed when it was elevated into specimens of natural history, elephants daubed with bits of gold-leaf, ostriches, cocks and hens, rabbits, husbands, wives, et cetera, et cetera. The bottom of her capacious basket contained "*soft goods*"—cotton handkerchiefs, stockings, garters, threads, tapes; all the penny, and even farthing, wants of cottage life. Sometimes, in addition to her basket, she carried a small pack on her back of "wonderful bargains" in cotton-prints and shawls, wielding a yard measure in her hand. But Molly's popularity did not arise so much from her ministering to the needs of those who dwelt far from town, and looked for her visits to relieve their necessities and make up for the forgetfulness which used to be one of the plagues of an Irish *message*, as from some admirable and lovable qualities. Molly was never out of temper. She was so essentially unselfish that it was, as she used to say, "the greatest pleasure of her life to be torminted to death!" Her clear cheery voice heralded her coming, singing the "Cruiskeen Lawn," or the sweet notes of "Shule Aroon," her "travelling songs." She was always heard before she was seen. In our house we called her "the sunbeam;" and no sooner was Molly's basket deposited on the step of the hall-door, than the influence of her cheerfulness, and that which can never be taught, but is beyond all price in the achievement of popularity—"tact"—diffused itself throughout the household; and "Here's Molly Candy!" sounded above and below like a joy-bell. She knew exactly what everybody wanted—from a brass thimble to the tint of a riband; but if she had not got what was required, she had generally sufficient management to make her customer believe that this or that would do as well. I have seen Betsy Shaw—most fastidious of (Irish) housemaids—come to Molly for three yards of sky-blue riband to trim her Sunday bonnet, and walk

away with a pair of list slippers instead: her sweet smile, musical voice, and invincible good humour, the servants declared, put the "comeither" upon them: there was no "gainsaying" Molly Candy. To me she was indeed a treasure. She executed all my commissions—took an interest in my pets. Nothing was too much or too little for her attention—nothing too "hot or too heavy" for her to do or to suffer in my cause. Then, Molly had always a stock of "news"—was suspected of being on familiar terms with the fairies—had seen a ghost one moonlight night, standing "*boul't upright*" in the very middle of the Green-meadow pond, with a cap—a pointed cap—upon its head "a mile long;" and all the while she passed it kept *curtcheying* to her; and she always stopped and returned the *curtchey*! "How could she do less, and the ould gentleman so civil?" To be sure, every one said it was Lefroy's great "*wather*"—butt that he had put in the pond to season, and the tun-dish on the top of it; but Molly persisted she had lived long enough in the world to know the "*differ*" betwix a wather-butt and a ghost.

Then, for ballads and song-books Molly had no rival; and it was a pretty enough sight to see her seated on the edge of her basket, on the fair-green, just under the shelter of the old hawthorn—her wares round her, and half-a-dozen country "boys and girls," with open mouths, catching "the turn of a tune," which Molly would repeat half-a-dozen times, to their delight and edification. Molly's "*Battle of the Nile*"—particularly when her *al fresco* pupils were able to join in the chorus—was immensely popular. She was often called in to sing it in the halls and dining-rooms of the country gentry. That, and

"When down on Banna's banks I strayed,"

(the still appreciated "Gramachree,") were annuities to Molly, and were rewarded by at the least a "tenpenny,"—the then current coin of the realm.

Business of that itinerant kind in Ireland, even to this day, is seldom conducted like business—it has a strong mingling of a gipsy sort of pleasure with it. The wandering merchant, male or female, "takes it asy," well knowing that the "kindly welcome," "a share of what's going," and a warm seat in the chimney-corner, are ever ready, by day or night, for the wayfarer.

In person, Molly was rather above the middle size—stout and active, not strong or masculine. At the period of which I write, she might have been any age between thirty and forty. Her grey eyes were deep-set, shaded by long black lashes; her mouth large and laughing; her features refined from their original coarseness by the generosity and unselfishness of her perfect womanhood; her hair was her one beauty—it was long and abundant, black with a blue tone, as rare as it is beautiful. When she talked of cutting it off, I thought it a bit of affectation.

I was so astonished at my favourite Molly Candy in masquerade,

that, after she left me, "with a repetition of entreaties not to tell I had "set eyes on *her* that day," and that if I didn't "sell the pass on her" she'd "search the seas all over until she got me a seal, or anything, no matter what I took a fancy to," I watched her loitering down the avenue, throwing stones at those of our colony of rooks who were left at home as storekeepers while the others went marauding—just as Larry Lynch invariably did; and as rooks never take assaults peaceably, some of the labourers were certain to see Larry and warn him off. Larry was no favourite in our part of the world—not that his being half-poacher, half-smuggler, and without any visible occupation, would have rendered him unpopular. If he had been a bright,

"Rantin', rovin' blade,"

with plenty of fun and frolic in him, he might have pelted the crows, poached and smuggled, and shaken his tatters at all the village dances in the county, and no one would have given him the "cold shoulder;" but he was a shy, sly, cowardly fellow, without a shade of bravery or good-nature in his composition—the very curse of a gentle, heart-broken mother, who excused him, and fondled him, and loved him much more than the really respectable, "steady-goin' boy," whose industry and affection kept the roof over her head!

It was evident that Molly Candy desired to be recognized that morning as Larry Lynch. Either (like most women) she "threw" far short of the mark, or the sentry-rooks were in a placable temper: they certainly did not fly and croak as was their custom when Larry assaulted them. So Molly took to pelting the geese who were quietly proceeding to their bath in the Green-meadow pond. This was too much! The gander screamed, and flew towards the disturber of his harem; and the geese cackled, and the dogs bayed in chorus. These sounds aroused the gardener's boy and the "hangers on," who commenced pelting and swearing at Molly; upon which Molly Candy made a rapid retreat and disappeared.

I was exceedingly perplexed at my favourite's sudden freak. I could not understand it in the least. It was so unlike her to appear in masculine garments. Molly, so modest and well-behaved; Molly, who said "she never had no fault to find with any of the elements, barrin' the wind—which often obliged her, when crossin' the mountain of Forth, to put stones in her pockets to keep her clothes down." I could not make it out.

Close to the Shell-house I met old Molly Brown, the guardian of the poultry.

"Ah, Miss," she exclaimed, "that thief of the world, Larry Lynch, has been here pelting the geese; and I'm sure he hasn't stopt at that—not he! I miss two of the Mistress's silver bantam chickens. I'm ready to take mee oath to Father Ned or the Masther they were all right last night—nine of 'em—and now there's but seven, and all along of that

Larry Lynch! The last time he came sneaking about the place I lost as fine a sittin' of Spanish eggs as ever went under a hen; and as to the crows, the craythurs, the very young ones set up a bobbery in their nests the minute they get sight of his ugly red head."

"How very provoking Molly! Did *you* see Larry this morning?"

"I had a beautiful view of his ugly back—every day's bad luck to him!"

"And you were sure it was Larry Lynch?"

"Why then, Miss, I wonder at you to ask such a question—as if I didn't know the tattered coat, and the foxy hair, and the very run of him, when Jim Kane took afther him for waylaying the geese—and, only Jim is such a spalpeen himself, wouldn't he have trounced him well! If the Masther was like any other gentleman, he'd have transported Larry long ago—that time he stole the calf, and had the impudence to go to Mary Blake's weddin' in a waistcoat made of its skin—and signs by, the cow, the calf's mother, knew the skin, and gave Larry a toss in the 'Five Acres,' when he went rabbit thievin'. My bleasin' on her above all cows that ever wore horns if she had broke his neck!"

And away went Molly Brown into the Shrubbery, calling, "Chick thet! Chick-chick-chick, thet! (much use in me callin' while Larry Lynch is in the land of the livin'!)—Chick!—chick! chick!—(if that Larry's not put out of the country I'll not stay another week at the big house!)—Chick! chick!—(how will I ever face the misthress, and she takin' such pride out of them bantams)—Chick!—I can't take more care of them than I do—barrin' I was to sleep on the hen-roost!—which I'll do, plaze God, sooner than be through-one-another the way I do be, and all owing to that thief of the world, Larry Lynch!"

"Molly Brown!" I exclaimed—for I had just discovered a heap of small feathers in a bed of Periwinkle, where I had a favourite nursery of golden snails—"Molly Brown, do come here!"

The little old henwife, whose face was cross-hatched like a cabbage-net, trotted up, with her short lively step. I pointed to the feathers.

"Lord, Miss! if here isn't the poor little cock, an' his throat all cut and mauled! Oh, then, wouldn't I die a happy woman if I saw you, Larry Lynch, in the way you've left that innocent chicken!"

"Why, Molly Brown, this is rats' work!"

"And who was it brought the rats here, I wonder! Wasn't it Larry Lynch? Was he ever asy, full or fastin', without a pocket full of 'em, getting up rat-hunts in the loft? (That was before the Master forbid him the run of the kitchen). We wouldn't have had the sign of a rat about the place now but for Larry Lynch!"

Certainly the stream set strongly against Larry Lynch.

I remember, the day suddenly lowered: the clouds gathered and came up from the sea; the wind began to speak rather loud in the belfry, and the good old bell was not slow to respond; so they kept up a not unmu-

sical grumbling and dinging between them, to which I listened in the old shell-house—long since crumbled into dust! I could not comprehend Molly Candy's masquerade. What could it mean? Down came the rain, splashing among the trees, tumbling off the roof, and crushing the more delicate flowers in the flower-knot; and every now and then, in the lull of the wind and rain, I heard that faithful old henwife's "Chick-chick-chick!" from the Shrubby. To be sure, no rain ever penetrated the entanglements of those trees. As soon as the shower was over I treaded my way to the house, and who should I meet but Peter, the old gardener. (Ah me; all the servants there were "old," and had grown so in service, which in those days was an inheritance). Peter was dripping like a river god, and dragging along a tree that had been cut down.

"Oh, Peter, what a shame! Why did you not get two or three of the men to help you during that pouring rain?"

"During the rain is it, Miss? Faix then, *how would you like yourself to be two or three men out in the pelting rain?*"

Peter had such an odd way of putting things.

The morning passed with occasional showers—some of them accompanied by thunder and lightning; and towards evening a heavy in-shore gale set in. There were no weather-signals in those days, except indeed that Mathew Crane (who was considered weather-wise) would hobble down from the Lodge and report that the red cow carried her tail on her back; or the cat went, three times running, over her left ear while washing her face; or the gulls were screaming in-shore; or the swallows were flying low; or the crows came home early—an infallible sign of bad weather; but in those days we were contented with simple omens, and believed in them, though we did not like to confess it. I am certain I believed in the cow's tail! I would not have gone the long walk over the cliffs to Bannow Church when I was thirteen without taking a peep at the position of Cherry's tail. Yes! it is very well to laugh at me, but Cherry was a wise cow—(it was Cherry who tossed Larry Lynch).

The weather continued gusty, with occasional showers—the day of days for a long practice, to get in all the "sensations" of the "Battle of Prague," or attain perfect mastery over "Steibelt's Storm;" a day to read the "Scottish Chiefs," or, better still, "Marmion." Of course I write of what was practised and what was read in my girlhood;—the young eyes bent upon this page never saw the "Battle of Prague," or "Steibelt's Storm," or the "Scottish Chiefs,"—or—Well, I hope they have seen "Marmion;" if they have not, let them straightway find it out and be happy as I was in the dear grim old Library, that afternoon, over its pages, oblivious of the wind and rain—of Molly Brown and her chickens—of the iniquities of Larry Lynch—even of Molly Candy's transformation; I was so absorbed in my poem, that I was not aware a "horse and its rider" had trotted to the hall-door, until "the Master" and Mr. Bannerman entered, and I heard Mr. Bannerman's

cutting, but not boisterous voice, which had a frosty sort of whistle in its tones, say, "At their old tricks again—and by daylight too! Really, my dear Sir, something must be done to check such goings on; we shall be the laughing-stock of the country!"

Mr. Bannerman was a springy, sharp, intelligent little man, more a "squireen" in position, than a "squire." "The Master" loved to take things "easy." I think "progress," and "railways," and "electricity," even "gas," would, if he had lived in those days, have driven him mad. He liked "to let well alone," and was apt to believe that whatever was, was "well." He did not *like* to be troubled in the morning; and he would *not* be troubled in the evening. Mr. Bannerman had gone on adding acre to acre by purchase during the previous twenty years, so that his "farm" was growing into a little estate; and somehow, he never lost an opportunity of wriggling himself into the houses of the "rale ould residents;" and, though on his first entrance he might be received coolly, yet his never appearing to see or feel, his intelligence and unfortunately his always having money to lend "on security" to whoever unfortunately wanted to borrow, were gradually exalting Mr. Theophilus Bannerman from a "Squireen" into an Esquire! "T. Bannerman, Esq.!"

Mr. Bannerman had evidently great faith in "the soothing system;" he never noticed a slight, and could, at any time, laugh off an insult.

At first, as if by common consent, everybody who was anybody repudiated "that fellow Bannerman;" then some county authority said that Bannerman had excellent judgment—then *Mr.* Bannerman was invited, for some undeveloped reason, to dinner by one of the *real* gentry. People's names in those days did not peep forth from their dinner-napkins, and so he very wisely took the lowest seat. The next invitation placed him a little higher; and at last Mr. Bannerman's absence from the county dinners—*not* his presence *at* them—would cause observation and inquiry.

He knew when to keep silence, and when to speak; and, above all, he knew how to avoid whisky-punch—and to this rare and peculiar knowledge I believe he owed, in a greater degree than we can now comprehend (from the happy improvement of after-dinner "manners and customs"), his intimate acquaintance with the finance of his neighbours. Secrets would out under the influence of whisky-punch. But, however well Mr. Bannerman "got on" with the gentlemen, he never advanced beyond the dignity of a "squireen" with the ladies. The ladies where he visited held up their heads, and curtsied—and curtsies *were* curtsies in those days.

I hated Mr. Bannerman; I was told it was wicked to hate any one, but I *did* hate him—and I did *not* try to help it. I, a young lady in my "teens," and tall, very tall of my age, and looking—every one said—at least two years older than I was (I hope I don't look so now) to be called, on that very afternoon, "little Missy" by Mr. Bannerman, and asked if I had been reading "Jack and the Bean Stalk!"

"The Master" seemed flushed and fidgety,—dear, good, kind man! He might have imagined, in the first instance, that Mr. Bannerman's call was *not* on *public* business; for he hated business of any kind, and did not enjoy being reminded of his magisterial duties after the first dinner-bell had rung—more particularly as he was always

"On hospitable thoughts intent ;"

and Mr. Bannerman was *the* one visitor whom he would not like to ask to dinner without a little previous private appeal to his wife's forbearance. But Mr. Bannerman rapidly set him at ease as to the *cause* of his visit. "In broad daylight, some of the smugglers (whom, he must say, a little active exertion on the part of the law would have dispersed long ago) had been at it again—landed a cargo at Featherd early that very morning! and, despite the military (called out from the fort of Duncannon), had succeeded in getting the greater part of the cargo off—he, 'the Master,' would be called on in a few minutes to take the depositions of some of Captain Burke's men."

"Captain Burke's men!" repeated the Master; "why, what have I to do with Featherd smugglers? What is the ferry between Bannow and Featherd for, if it isn't to show the natural division of the county? Let them take their Featherd smugglers to Loftus Hall, or Tintern; but don't let them come to me for committals, when there are two magistrates on the spot. Our Bannow boys mind their farming; I have no trouble with them. You must be very fond of law, Mr. Bannerman, to have crossed Bannow ferry twice in one day."

"Public duty, my dear Sir! and I do sincerely regret that several of the Bannow boys were at Featherd—were recognized and pursued; but they managed to get at the ferry-boat, and left us at the other side—and you may be sure our worthy Bannow boatman was in no haste to get the boat to us. The fellow is generally tipsy—this morning he was sober, but made believe to be drunk, and seemed determined to capsize us."

How I wished he had!

"Well, Mr. Bannerman?"

"Well, my dear Sir!—Oh, here they come! The men recognized four, but I see only three in custody."

"Quite enough," sighed the Master, seating himself with the air of a martyr in the great arm-chair that always stood "ready" at one end of the long table in the Library. "There—yes—here's Burn's Justice, and the Bible—and here"—He rang a hand-bell, and the old servant, who was called "the Judge's Clerk," entered.

He whispered the Master, and I heard the words, "Dinner, cook says, murdered intirely!"

The Master shook his head, and looked at the time-piece, as if he really expected it was going.

Of course, the prisoners were followed by a troop of trailing women

and children. With some little difficulty they were prevented entering the Library, where, in a few moments, half a dozen soldiers and their prisoners formed a very picturesque group. There was a no less picturesque gathering on the steps of the hall-door, and resting on the broad stone sill of the end window was Mary Candy's basket—Mary Candy's full rosy arms enwreathing the handle, and Mary Candy's good-humoured face set amid the folds of her blue-black hair—all, as in a picture. Mary Candy in her natural dress!

After the usual preliminaries—the soldiers swearing that those three men, and one more well known to them by “word and deed,” by “sight and sound,” were on the Sands; and while their comrades made off with the contraband articles, they covered their retreat, turning blue eyes into black ones, firing with pistols and fowling-pieces, pelting stones ‘like thunder-bolts’; and, though repeatedly called on to surrender, scampering off like a parcel of hares, round and over, and through, the Sand-hills, to Bannow Ferry, the boat of course waiting for them, and *only* them, and then rowing leisurely, “making all kinds of fun of us as we crossed over; insulting us while we stood shivering and shaking on the Sands waiting for the Bannow boatman to come for us, which your honour may be sure he was in no hurry to do——”

“William Parrell,” said “the Master,” addressing the oldest of the prisoners, “I am ashamed to see a respectable man like you given to such ways.”

“Mc, ye’r honour! No wonder ye’r honour would—that is, setting a case I did which I didn’t, but was drivin’ mee shlip of a pig to Ballyhack to sell; and seein’ the crowd on the Sands, I thought no harrum in life just to see what they war afther; and sure it was betther I was born stone blind and never see another shimmer of light than to be cotcht in mee innocence, just lookin’ at the men rowlin’ the caskeens—nothing else.”

“If your pig was with you, William Parrell,” questioned Mr. Banner-man, keenly, “where is it now?”

“Oh, maybe ye’r honour’s got it! Oh, if ye have, tell me Sir? for the love of Saint.Patrick, Sir, have *you* mee fine shlip of a pig?”

“Me!” said the *sqireen* indignantly; “what should I do with your pig?”

“Pound it ye’r honour!—that’s what you’d do with it, in coorse! Oh, mee darlint pig; unless some of the quality made a mistake and tuck it for one of their own, its murdered it is in the scrimmage!”

“And you, Phil Roche?”

“Your honour!” interrupted the Corporal—“I think it right to mention that Phil Roche was taken close to his own house on the moor, in the heart of a turf-stack, with firearms in his possession.”

“Thru for ye, Mr. Corporal; ye spoke the true word there. Every one of Nancy’s—(my wife, ye’r honour—ye mind whin I married her!

God bless ye, Sir, sure you gave me the tinpennies to pay the priest)—every one of her beautiful ducks were murdered by a weazel. ‘Phil,’ says she, ‘I’ve just seen the ugly baste run into the turf-stack,’ says she, ‘and take your gran’father’s *ould* gun,’ says she, ‘and try if ye can’t shoot him,’ says she. Nancy herself and five of the childre are outside, and ready to prove my words.”

“No doubt of that,” said Mr. Bannerman, in his sneering voice.

“God bless you, Mr. Bannerman! God send you the wife you deserve, Sir, and five childre, to spake up for you in your time of trouble—when it comes,” rejoined Phil.

The Corporal made no observation, but laid the captured gun before “the Master,” who examined it.

“A capital *new* gun, Phil.”

“Ye’r honour has only to look in the glass foreint ye, to see that sometimes, the oulder one is, the younger one looks; maybe it’s the same thing with the poor gun as it is with ye’r honour!”

Oh, sly Phil! He knew that “the Master,” even then, was not a little vain of his good looks.

“And now for *you*, Master Larry Lynch,” recommenced the magistrate, after a long pinch of snuff, which was a sign of his being pleased, “I am not at all surprised at seeing *you* in custody.”

“God bless ye’r honour!”

“I do not think there has been a wrong thing done in the county during the last five years in which you have not taken an active part.”

“Thank ye’r honour; I wouldn’t be behind mee neighbours if I could help it.”

“You young scoundrel! for your good mother’s sake I have wasted more advice on you than on all the lads in the parish—thrown it away.”

“No, ye’r honour, for I gothered it all up and laid it by; a fine store, ye’r honour; I’m reformed, ye’r honour; there isn’t a quieter or a betther boy in the parish than Larry Lynch.”

“Larry,” said “the Master,” provoked out of his usual gentleness, “Larry, you are incorrigible!”

“What’s *that*, ye’r honour?”

“Past cure!”

“Then let me die asy,” he replied, assuming a pitiful expression of countenance.

“What business had you on the Featherd Sands?”

“None at all, ye’r honour.”

“Your honour,” put in the Corporal, “he was the ringleader of the whole; he fought with the activity of a monkey and the fierceness of a bull-dog—covered the smugglers’ retreat, Sir, and whisked into the boat and over the ferry, grinning and laughing at us all the time—he was the worst of the lot.”

“And where did you catch him?”

"By his mother's fireside, your honour—peeling a potatoe, as cool and composed as if nothing had happened!"

"That's the only thrue word spoke, as far as I'm *consarned*," said the intrepid Larry. "Now look, ye'r honour. I wasn't in it at all at all—fresh or fastin'—good or bad!—there! I'm innocent of the whole of it—as innocent as a new-born babby! Will ye'r honour ask that fine soldier *with a watch* what time the scrimmage on the Sands was up?"

The Master put the question.

"Between nine and ten."

"Oh, what a fine thing it is to have the truth in one's pocket, if it can fit nowhere else. See that now! betwixt nine and ten this blessed morning I come down here, wantin' to see ye'r honour, thinkin' maybe ye'd help me off to Amerikee, or spake up for me; for it's more than six weeks since any one could say 'black was the white of mee eye!' 'Ye're reformed, Larry, my blessin', says mee poor mother, 'and go to the Masther, and tell him ye mane to abide by his words, and maybe he'd help you!' And so I made meeself as dacent as I could and come on—but that thief of a gander was going to Kelly's field with his wife and children. Now, that gander was always an obstacle to me—always! and stones is grate temptations—it's so nate and handy to hit anything with a clip of a stone—stones are a poor Irishman's powder and shot. 'Ye villain,' says I to the gander, 'bad luck to ye for puttin' temptation in mee way, and I so bent on goodness!' And I *did* let fly at him—I own it—I did. And the roarin' of the whole flock was like a flock of dragons—and, by the same token, Pether Kane's boys set the dogs at me—and your honour's own clark, Mr. Radford, saw me, and knows what he said too—if he doesn't remember, I do—and it's hard on me, ye'r honour,"—continued Larry, drawing himself up with a degree of vagabond dignity, until he looked almost worthy of a gipsy crown—"tryin' to be a comfort to mee poor mother, and to pick up for good, and go creditable out of the country to Amerikee, to my uncle, to be sworn to, and mistaken for some other blackguard, and I as white as a lily from the whole of it! I heard ye'r honour's clock strikin' ten just before I let fly at the gander."

"I could swear to him among a thousand Irishmen," said the Corporal.

"Being English," suggested Larry, meekly, "he can't be expected to know one Irishman from another."

The Master summoned the young Kanes and examined his own clerk. Mr. Bannerman questioned and cross-examined to no purpose—THE ALIBI was proved—as much to the astonishment of the soldiers as to that of Larry's fellow-prisoners.

The other two were committed, and Larry was discharged.

"Long life to ye'r honour!" said Larry. "If I might make so bould as to ax ye'r honour and Mr. Bannerman for a thrifle—as I'm emigratin' to my uncle next week, ye'r honour, from Cork, gentlemen,

and my mother is well contint; and Larry Lynch won't be no more throuble to you. And," he added, with a half-suppressed grin at his own impudence, "maybe ye'r honour, to make up for the ill-usage I got this blessed day, would just write me a scrap of a character! It might do me a good turn where I'm going, and they don't know no better."

This proposition was received with laughter; but there was great exultation without when Larry rushed with a "Huroo!" into the crowd.

The Corporal declared it was quite useless expecting anything to go right "after THAT!" but every one said he was mistaken in the man; and public feeling was dead against him—all our servants declaring that, bad as Larry was, and no "boy" in the country could well be worse, that was no reason his life should be sworn away for smuggling—when in the sight of their eyes the worst thing he did, "that day, anyhow," was throwing stones at the gander.

Before Larry joined the crowd Molly Candy had disappeared.

The next morning I was at "the cottage," where I kept those pets that were forbidden the house, and Molly found me endeavouring to convert an irreclaimable sparrow-hawk into a "tasselled gentil."

When the excitement was over, I was vexed with Molly Candy—she had acted an untruth, and my regard for her had very nearly crumbled into dust, when her broad kindly face beamed upon me.

"God save you, Miss!" I did not give the counter-signal of good feeling as usual, by rejoining—

"God save you kindly." But said very gravely—"Oh, that is you!"

"Ye'r not angry with me, Miss Maria?"

"I think, Mary, you ought to be angry with yourself."

"For getting that good-for-nothing off, Miss? Thru for ye, a grater tormint than Larry Lynch never broke the world's bread, and I don't know what we'd do without America for such as Larry Lynch; and sure he's going to America to his uncle—he is indeed! But this is it, dear—When I was down in the fever, two years last Lady-day, and at the fag end of the parish lying like many another in a dry ditch, with a few sticks and a blanket over me, and the neighbours afeered to do more than lave me the dhrink of water or the sup of sweet milk taken from their own children, Mrs. Lynch, Larry's mother, remembered a good turn mee poor father did her husband: she took me in her arms and she laid me in her bed; and *she*—when she did sleep—slept on the floor of her cabin—and fetched the doctor—and *begged* for me what I wanted. SHE SAVED MY LIFE! She knew Larry was in the smuggling, and she knew the soldiers would be out and track 'em; and the poor mother's broken heart trembled for the good-for-nothing that had broken it; and the thought of how I might save him came to me like a flash of lightning. And sure I have her prayers for that same before me in heaven! And darlin', if I couldn't show my gratitude, the world would be all up with MOLLY CANDY!"

SIDNEY HERBERT.

IN MEMORIAM.

UNTIL the twenty-eighth of November, 1861, we knew but imperfectly the high estimation in which Beauty of Character is held, and what it is able to effect. We knew heretofore, what Force of Character can do. We knew that men are ever ready to acknowledge the influence of a strong will—that to it they will render respect—that to it they will succumb and offer homage. But, on the day mentioned, we for the first time witnessed, in their full extent, the admiration, and honour, and love, that Beauty of Character can command. On that day there was a meeting in King Street, St. James's. It was a notable gathering—such as is rarely seen, even in London. All classes of the community had representatives there. On the platform were Statesmen, Orators, Churchmen, Soldiers,—men of all parties, and men of none; and, as they took their seats, cheer after cheer greeted them, for each was a man of mark. A Prince of the Blood Royal, the Commander-in-Chief of our Armies, was in their midst. The occasion, moreover, that had brought together these celebrated men was a very memorable one. His Royal Highness having taken the chair, the purpose of the meeting was unfolded. Then it appeared that all those present had come to record their esteem and regard for one to whom England owes much, but whom England has of late lost—had come to do honour to the memory of one who was dead. And he whom they thus lamented was worthy of all honour—was “one in a thousand”—was one who had died whilst in the performance of his duty to his country—was the well-beloved SIDNEY HERBERT.

All who spoke on the occasion bore testimony—each in the particular department in which he is an authority—to the value and excellence of the departed. The Commander-in-Chief, regarding the service with which he is immediately identified, declared that the late Lord Herbert had the clearest views on military matters of any civilian he had ever met, and that his anxious desire was ever to promote the interests and welfare of the British army, and, in that way, to serve his country. He was succeeded by the Prime Minister, who spoke of the political career of the late Lord—of his eminent public services, of his zeal, of the qualities he possessed which fitted him for the highest public functions, of his singular powers, of his immense popularity, of the vast numbers of personal and political friends he had made, of his having had the happy fortune never to have made a personal enemy. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that it was seldom given to men to exhibit before their fellow-creatures such a combination of every mental and moral, as well as social gift, as that which belonged to Lord Herbert—“he was the gentlest man that ever undertook to confront the difficulties of public affairs.” Then, the

most eloquent Bishop of our Church rose. He had known Lord Herbert from his sweet youth up, and lamented that, when he was removed, life lost one of its most blessed lights; one who never failed to feel with every sorrow; one whose sensibility of sympathy was unsurpassed; one who spent himself freely for every suffering brother, or to mitigate the adverse lot of every tempted sister. Their dear departed friend had left memorials, irrespective of the results of his political labours and military reforms, that will endure for ages. He was the founder of hospitals, he was the builder of churches, he was the maintainer of schools, he was a judicious encourager of rational emigration,—there never was any one reasonable plan for mitigating the sufferings of others which did not meet at once, in him, a ready response. Others—and all foremost men of the country and the age—followed in the same strain.

There is much truth in that saying—"A man is not a hero to his valet." Most men are compelled by the force of circumstances to wear a cloak in public. Some wear it so as entirely to shroud themselves in its folds; some wear it loosely, and exhibit themselves but in parts; and some put it on in such a manner as not to conceal themselves at all, but only to let the world know they are in possession of such a garment, and could, if need be, use it. Most of us have some rent we wish to hide—few can afford to go abroad without their cloak; but in private life, amongst friends, it is thrown aside. There a man's true nature is learned; there he has no occasion to appear other than he really is. If he is in authority elsewhere, he is to act as one having authority; if he is under the control of another, he is to obey that other; only at home and amongst his equals may he act as he likes. So, the Judge leaves his ermine and his gravity at the courts; the Soldier does not carry his weapons into the street; the Schoolmaster, outside the walls of the school-room, is as mild as other men. But although it is not given to all to be themselves at all times; some there have been who find it possible to be so—but they are few. Lord Herbert was undoubtedly one of these—he was pre-eminently a daylight man—all his actions will bear the full blaze of the sun. To him simulation or dissimulation, even in manner, was unknown. He was the same all the year round, and at home as abroad; he was clothed in goodness as with a garment; his mind ever moved in charity. None came in contact with him but felt the beauty of his character; his very presence was a revelation of his worth—he was a "hero" even to his "valet."

No man had greater power over himself. The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life, were despised for nobler aims. With a princely fortune, of an illustrious race, of noble presence, with a refined taste, an accomplished scholar, a lover of the arts—he might have attained every desire it was possible for him to have conceived; but he preferred rather to serve his country than yield himself to selfish indulgence.

It was impossible to avoid noticing, at the late meeting, that all the speakers—although evidently desirous of confining their remarks to those

public acts of Lord Herbert which were of so great a benefit to the country at large—were yet unable to restrain themselves from touching on the noble and beautiful private character of him who was in their thoughts. General Peel, half fearing it would be so, ventured to give a caution on the subject; but he himself had already broken the rule by which he advised the assembly to be guided.

No one of those who spoke could confine himself to what was the primary object of the meeting—the recognition, namely, of the Public Services of him who has recently departed from among us; but it was apparent that there were springing up for utterance, in each speaker, thoughts of the many hearty and genial qualities, of the unselfishness, of the manly bearing, and of the loving-kindness, of the late Statesman.

But, of a surety, his public services were as valuable as his private qualities were loveable. It would be incorrect to say he held a first place amongst English politicians. He had not the energetic will, the fertility of resources, the power of command, that have distinguished some of our most renowned statesmen; yet, though he lacked these, he was possessed of gifts that amply compensated for their absence. What he could not accomplish by force of will he brought about by gentleness of manner; his laborious activity stood in the stead of invention; and, without exercising command, he accomplished his desires by his “winning” way. No task that required the minutest attention was esteemed by him irksome; nothing that was necessary was considered impossible; and what he undertook to do, that he never left undone. When the *Times*, shortly after his death, spoke of him as one who, had he lived, would have assuredly occupied the highest position in the councils of the Sovereign, the mere public were surprised. They had never contemplated the possibility of one like him filling a post they had been accustomed to associate with a man of far other qualities than those they believed he possessed. The *Times*, however, was, without doubt, right in its conjecture. With his political associates and intimate friends Sidney Herbert was held in high esteem as a Statesman, and they had marked out for him a career second to none. The public are not always in a favourable position for appreciating a man and his intellectual gifts, and attainments, and powers; they too often confound the noise that surrounds the vulgar charlatan for the voice of true Fame; and, not supposing it possible they may be mistaken in their estimate, measure the candidates for their applause by a very inaccurate standard. If, however, as in the case of Sidney Herbert, those with whom a man comes into intimate contact, and who are most certainly competent and unprejudiced judges, have a high opinion of that man's parts, the verdict arrived at is sure to be in accordance with justice. Often, indeed, there are men, such for instance as was the late John Sterling, whose public performance bears but a small proportion to their private promise—whose executive are vastly inferior to their conceptive faculties; and there are

those whose delicacy restrains them from a display of their powers, but who, nevertheless, have the powers and exert them. In the latter class was Sidney Herbert. His performances were of the highest value. As Secretary of State for War he displayed qualities of the first order. Everything he suggested had a practical bearing, and the vast improvements he effected are known to all. To him we owe that Commission for Inquiring into the Sanitary State of the army which has produced such good results; to him we are indebted for the reorganization of the Medical Department of the army, and the Commission that prepared the Vital Statistics of the army in such a form as to afford a guarantee against the recurrence of the evils he struggled to overcome. The best test of the value of these Commissions is to be found in the significant fact, stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the highest authority, that the mortality of the British army has, in consequence of the measures in which Lord Herbert, at so great a cost to himself, took so commanding a share, been reduced by no less than one-half—that is to say, one-half of the men die now who died in the army under the same circumstances before those measures were adopted.

And now that the reality of his services to his country has been ascertained, and it has been thought only an act of justice that the Nation should, in a positive and public way, mark its sense of his worth by paying a fitting tribute to his memory, who is there that will not aid in the work? Who but feels an obligation to do so? *He* was one of the first to see the propriety of the country recognizing acts of great public service, and recording its respect for those who performed them.

His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge could not but remember, when taking the chair at the late meeting, a previous occasion on which he had performed that office in the same room. Exactly six years had elapsed.* Then, as now, he was surrounded by the *élite* of the land, and then, as now, the object of the meeting was to recognize services rendered to the State. We refer to the gathering that assembled there to establish the NIGHTINGALE FUND. He whom we now lament was, on that occasion, one of the Honorary Secretaries, and distinguished himself by his active exertions to perpetuate the memory of the self-sacrifice of FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE. Few then thought that she, at that time so delicate, would outlive “her chief,” and see him fall a sacrifice to his duty. He is gone! It remains for us to erect a worthy monument to his memory, on which may be inscribed the lines of the old English poet—

“Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet and blossom in the dust!”

* The meeting to promote the “Nightingale Fund” was held in Willis’s Rooms, on Thursday, the 29th November, 1855: the meeting to render a tribute to the memory of Sidney Herbert was held in Willis’s Rooms, on Thursday, the 28th November, 1861: the Duke of Cambridge presiding on both occasions.

THE DEFENCES OF BRITISH NORTH AMERICA.

IN the event of war (which, however deeply we may deplore, we must be prepared for) between the remaining United States of America and this country—whether that war occur immediately from the outrage on the British Flag, or whether it grow out of another among the thousand injuries or insults a nation, under mob sovereignty, can at any moment resort to against another situated as we are, with interests equally sensitive in every quarter of the earth—the question which presses on our statesmen most immediately is, of course, the Defence of our North American possessions.

The general principle of military relationship which Great Britain has for some years been endeavouring to establish between herself and her Colonies, is that she should protect them against foreign aggression brought on for the sake of the whole empire, and that she should leave them to protect themselves against internal disturbance, or minor commotions of a local nature, with barbarous nations surrounding them. This is the general principle; though it is continually departed from—as at present in New Zealand—for the benefit of colonists, and to the misfortune of English taxpayers. A contest with the United States, occurring as a sort of safety-valve for American indignation, will, in almost any case, be one in which we shall war essentially for Imperial interests; and it will therefore become our duty to extend the utmost protection we can to all the North American Colonies, only calling on them to contribute a force in aid, fairly representing the quota due from such a proportion of the British Empire as their area may constitute.

Of all these Colonies, the one most needing our protection is necessarily Canada, from the great length of frontier on which it is contiguous to the Northern States, and also from its remoteness in sudden emergency from the assistance of the British fleet. Were we to try to force Canada entirely to defend her frontier, while we contented ourselves with operating on the seaboard of the United States, the Colony would naturally complain of being saddled with a large expenditure in men and money—large, out of all proportion to the fraction of the empire which she forms—for the sake of asserting, not a local, but an imperial right. Discontented at such unfair treatment, the Provinces would probably decline to be so compromised for British purposes, and would conclude a truce of their own. Although amply loyal to Queen Victoria, and especially opposed to the idea of absorption into the American Republic, there can be little doubt that in such a case the North American Provinces, withdrawing from us, would found a new Anglo-Saxon Federation; and as, in these days, if the Colonists showed anything like unanimity in their desire to separate, it cannot be supposed that we should attempt to hinder them—such a war might then lead to a permanent division of our empire. This division no Englishman desires; for although what benefit accrues in an union between us and a colony is principally on the side of the latter, we

are still unwilling that the great dominion where the Flag of Britain flies supreme should be diminished by a single acre. Like the parent whose son sets up a household for himself, we might welcome and wish happiness to the new unit in society, or in the comity of nations—as the case might be—but we should miss him from the old circle, and feel the blank his absence causes. If, then, we would retain our American Colonies, we must be prepared to defend them to the death against all foreign enemies, and especially against their immediate neighbours.

Let us now assume, as a duty we owe ourselves—but which we pray may cease to be so—for the sake of humanity—assume a war to have broken out, and let us contemplate what would be its first effect in regard to the North American Provinces. We may suppose one of our earliest acts to have been the recognition of the Southern Confederacy, and the forcible abolition of that ghost of a blockade which the United States have sought to maintain over its ports for some months past. Cotton will at once pass out of the Secession States, and money flowing in, in a corresponding degree, simultaneously with the crippling of the Northern commerce by the rigid blockade which our naval superiority will enable us to institute, the mutually offensive military power of the rival Republics will rise in the South as it falls in the North. Such being the case, and the South still remaining, as its interests dictate, on the defensive, President Lincoln's Government will perceive the hopeless character of the struggle they are waging, and will compromise differences by acknowledging the independence of the Slave-holding Confederacy. Thus will the States be freed from apprehension, to a great extent at least, as regards their Southern frontier. The United States Army is a Volunteer force, and doubtless a considerable portion of the troops would immediately return to their homes, rather than participate in further campaigning; but the ordinary resorts of labour will have been deranged by late intestine commotion, while present commercial enterprise will be dwarfed under the British blockade. Thousands of half-trained demi-soldiers will then be eager for an advance to the Lake frontier, with a chance of glory or plunder in an attack on the Canadian Britishers.

It may be said that the best assistance we can give to Canada is by an attack on the Atlantic coast—on New York, on Boston, Portland, Philadelphia, or some other of the tempting cities alongside which the Warrior and her iron sisters might readily be laid. But these measures, disastrous and permanently irritating as they might be to the States, would in no degree prevent the advance of a large army, thirsting perhaps for vengeance, towards the ridiculous boundary-line which, regardless of all natural objects and landmarks, separates by a degree of latitude Lower Canada from the States of New York and Vermont. This invading force would be only partially disciplined, it is true, but yet formidable, from its numbers, and from the courage and *savoir-faire* of its individual constituents. That the mere map-frontier of Lower Canada is indefensible need hardly be said: every stream, lake, and gorge is in a north-and-

south direction, and completely in an invader's favour. The districts near the border must, therefore, be abandoned in the event of a hostile advance in force, and a strategic position will have to be taken between it and the great river St. Lawrence, if it should happen that our generals have a *corps d'armée* sufficient to justify them in challenging a battle in the open field. otherwise, the probable object we should have would be in preventing the enemy from passing that channel. More to the east, the State of Maine abuts on British territory for some five hundred miles, and it would, without doubt, afford a good opening for an attack upon New Brunswick; but, on the one hand, the men of Maine are supposed to set a great value on the trade Portland derives from being, as at present, the Atlantic terminus of Canadian railways, and to be, therefore, unwilling to embroil themselves with Britain more than they can help; while, on the other hand, instant vengeance could be taken on its coast towns by our fleet, to say nothing of diversions that might be made from the sea-line. On these grounds we may reasonably conclude the frontier adjoining Maine tolerably safe from any attacks more formidable than those of border warfare, which the British borderers would themselves repel, and, perhaps, reciprocate.

In some degree, a similar view may be taken of Michigan and the Western States, which are far from heartily of accord with Washington and the New England war party; so that Port Sarnia and Canada West would have little to fear, in a military sense, from Detroit and its neighbours on the Federal side of the strait between Lakes Huron and Erie. The theatre, then, of direct military invasion would be narrowed to the Niagara river, to the St. Lawrence from Kingston nearly to Montreal, and to the before-mentioned boundary-line along the forty-fifth parallel from the St. Lawrence to a point about 100 miles due south of Quebec. On all these lines of attack the Americans have extraordinary facilities for concentrating large bodies of troops in a very short time, through their numerous railroads, which, converging towards the Lake coasts from all parts of the Union, have lines sometimes close to, but always near, the shore, from end almost to end of the boundary. This facility of assault is applicable more especially to the two first of the districts I have indicated; and, fortunately, it is there that we too, through railway help, are best in a position for defensive purposes to throw all our men available for field-service in a few hours on any point attacked. The Grand Trunk and Great Western Railways of Canada would allow of the Niagara frontier being held by the regulars from Toronto, or even Kingston, until the Militia and Volunteers of West Canada could flock in to the rescue. The line, again, of the St. Lawrence, setting aside the river's width and probable naval obstacles, is so well secured by the Grand Trunk, which keeps almost to its bank, that the great garrisons of Kingston and Quebec would be available in any emergency, and are within a few hours of the scene of action.

The same, however, can in no way be said for the last of the frontier

lines to which I have alluded. It is open to attack on every point, strategically indefensible, and incapable of deriving assistance from the naval power. The effects of this transfluvian province having to be evacuated, and especially if our troops should be compelled to limit their operations to the north bank of the St. Lawrence, would be peculiarly disastrous to colonial railway property; since a large portion of the Grand Trunk Railway—the only communication between Montreal and Quebec—would be exposed to the destruction that would certainly be vented on a work of such value to ourselves. It is unfortunate in the extreme that the point which it is of most importance to defend is least capable of being defended, except by the manœuvres of a stronger field-force than we seem likely to possess by the time the campaign opens.

Assuming war and 1862 to be of equal age, what would be the position of the belligerents as regards the American continent? Every man of the United States force is on the Potomac, or on the long line dividing Federation from Confederacy; and, since winter compels them to suspend operations even in warm Virginia, it is quite certain that no Northern attack on ice-bound Canada can be made before the summer, or at least until late in the spring. We have, therefore, some four months for preparation against the coming storm.

The force of British regulars in North America in the autumn of 1861 has been about 4,700 Infantry, with 700 Artillery, in Canada; and 1,600 Infantry, with 300 Artillery and Engineers, in Nova Scotia. Added to the total of these are, ere now, the Battery of Field Artillery of some 230 men sent out in the Melbourne, and two regiments of Infantry, per steamers Persia and Australasia. If the St. Lawrence be frozen, these latter, together with the large reinforcements of Cavalry, Guards, Infantry, Artillery, Engineers, and Military Train, which are either on their way out, or under orders to embark, will have to land in Nova Scotia or New Brunswick, and thence make their journey as best they can to Quebec and Montreal. The duty of crossing a country, in many parts a wilderness, at a time when the snow is frozen deeply on the ground, when the rivers are rough troughs of ice-lumps shaken together, as it were, in struggling confusion, and so fixed, when the thermometer frequently registers 62° of frost, is no light one. Winter marches at all times try troops severely, and we must be prepared to hear of many of our brave fellows being frost-bitten. The route generally taken is from St. John, New Brunswick to Fredericton, and by sledges up the frozen river St. John to Great Falls; thence by "carriages,"—a sort of high, rough gigs—past Madawaska and Lake Temisquata to the St. Lawrence. Up the rough ice of that great stream voyagers had formerly to pursue their bitter way by carriages or sledges; but now the railway extends to the mouth of the Rivière du Loup 120 miles below Quebec, so that at this point the perils of the journey are over. It remains to be seen how far our experience in the Crimea will have taught us the art of moving an

army under obstacles of weather; but enormous exertions will certainly be requisite to convey the great stores of ammunition, arms, and heavy guns which have been sent, across the ice-bound province for a distance of more than 250 miles. The 43rd Foot, in December 1837, succeeded in making its way from Fredericton to Quebec in eighteen days, without any assistance from railways, and without the loss of a man. That corps had, however, no *impedimenta* more embarrassing than its own provisions, whereas the regiments now to attempt the journey are to be accompanied by munitions of every description. On the occasion adverted to, the 43rd experienced very severe weather, the men at times almost perishing in fearful drifting snow-storms; they proceeded in parties, each of one company, for which night accommodation was found in log-huts existing for the reception of wayfarers at stages averaging fifteen miles apart.

Although the principal defence of these Colonies devolves upon this occasion on Great Britain, we have a right to expect such assistance from the Local forces as their strength will permit. By the law, every adult Canadian under sixty is a Militiaman, and under this rule there are, throughout the provinces, 328,000 men enrolled. When we remember the gallant deeds of the Canadian Militia in the last war, and the laurels they achieved under Brock, we look fondly on this goodly show of National Guards. Alas! however, the host is purely a paper one; but 10,000 of all this army are known to have been recently trained as effective soldiers. Now, indeed, we are sending arms, instructors, and commanders; so that, the prime stuff being still identical with that of the heroes of the former days, we may fairly hope, ere the winter expires, to have a considerable force of Militia embodied, and at least as effective individually as the Volunteer army to which they will be opposed. This much may safely be said, that the Canadians will lack neither courage, physique, nor patriotic antipathy to the enemy.

Again, our Naval resources are to be relied on for a large amount of direct aid in the defence of Canada. By the St. Lawrence and the Welland Canal, the whole line of water frontier from Lake Huron to the Atlantic is available for our cruisers. Under the energetic Government of Lord Palmerston, there cannot be a doubt that the very day these waters are open our Navy will be amply represented by gunboats, despatch-vessels, and steam-sloops, which, patrolling the lakes and rivers, will prevent any hostile expedition from the States, while the latter's Lake ports are blockaded, and (if so disagreeable a necessity should arise) their towns bombarded. The same highway of water will, of course, when open, give us unbounded facilities for throwing in troops, according to any exigency of the struggle.

The critical question is, then, whether we shall be enabled to have upon the theatre of war—and especially in the districts of Montreal, Three Rivers, and St. Francis, which are most exposed—a force sufficient to cope with invasion, as soon as the Americans on their part shall be in strength to invade. Of the ultimate result of the war to us we cannot in any

case doubt : and if Sir Fenwick Williams succeeds in collecting 10,000 Regulars, with some 20,000 good Militia in the field, before the campaign commences, while Kingston, Quebec, and Halifax are adequately garrisoned, we need not apprehend disaster even in the initiatory operations.

Concurrently with the defence of Canada, the other provinces must be provided for. Halifax—probably the finest harbour in the world—with its arsenal and dockyard, must be protected at any cost, as a rendezvous of the utmost naval value, acting on the North as a check on the American privateers, in the same way that Bermuda does to the South of their seaboard. Passing to the Western extremity of our long line of frontier, British Columbia and Vancouver are exposed to attack from California—a misfortune which must be averted by the presence of a sufficient British squadron. If, on the other hand, we blockade San Francisco—as we certainly shall—it seems likely that that State may secede from a federation, connection with which confers no gain, and only involves it in trouble. With its prosperity and energy, California, as an independent commonwealth, would soon be the most powerful nation on the Eastern side of the Pacific. Utah, always uneasy in its chains, may now be considered virtually independent ; and, in a division, the American territories of Oregon and Washington, intervening between California and British Columbia, would almost certainly fall to the former. After these chip-pings, with a seceded South, where would the great American Union be ? There might remain a third-rate power, unless, indeed, as seems very possible, it split to its very heart into separate and mutually jealous Governments : Michigan unsympathising with Maine—neither with New York nor Pennsylvania. Under such circumstances the war must end—ingloriously enough—from the fact that there would be no enemy left to fight.

If our Temple of Janus again opens wide its doors, the bolts are not withdrawn by us : we deeply bewail the necessity for taking arms ; we feel that, however victorious we may be, we must yet undergo much suffering—much to ourselves, and still more to our North American colonies ; and we cannot but regret having to inflict pain—even though in just punishment—on cousins of our own blood, speaking our own Anglo-Saxon tongue—bearing our own cherished names—who have been, and who should be, our firmest allies. If the war result in the effacement of our enemy as a corporate nation from the map of the world, it is most unwillingly that we are forced to be the instruments of such a destruction. But for no ties of kindred, for no sympathy of origin—not even from a heartfelt repugnance to war—can Britain ever refrain from vindicating her honour—honour which it is her proudest boast to keep unblemished in every land and on every sea !

A TANGLED SKEIN.

BY ALBANY FONBLANQUE, JUN.

CHAP. I.

COMING HOME.

A BLAZING sunset in the Indian ocean—out of sight of land—and a great steam-ship throbbing her resolute way in solitary grandeur through the glittering waves that creamed and darkened in her wake! I think I can picture the scene in my own mind, but I had rather not try to describe it; for I was born within the sound of Bow bells, have never been to India, and consequently never came back from thence. I have to deal with very stern realities affecting persons, most of whom I can lay my hands upon at a few hours' notice, and associate them with scenes familiar to me from my youth—all but this. I should not like to run the risk of marring what I *know*, by attempting to detail what I have only heard of. I have read—(who has not?)—much print about the Overland Route. Shall I take down from their shelves half-a-dozen of the books in which it is described, hash up for you as many odds and ends of scenes and sketches therein contained, and serve up the dish in a sauce of my own composition? Will it possess the genuine Indian flavour? I am afraid not. It would taste of the pot; and I should be sure to put in some ingredient which, without being pleasing to the palate of the uninitiated, would expose my poor *rechauffé* in its true character. No! I will, if you please, describe that which I have seen—and that only.

The vessel in question was the Peninsular and Oriental steam-ship, Ganges, Captain Stevenson, bound to Suez. She had on board many sufferers by the Indian mutiny, and amongst them Captain Stephen Frankland, of the Bengal Light Cavalry. You will be good enough to picture for yourself the good ship which is bearing him, the persons of his fellow-voyagers (other than those to whom you will be introduced), and the appearances of the sunset which he is watching on the evening of the 8th of July, 1858, when first he is presented to your notice.

Brave, honest, Stephen Frankland! If there ever was a man who deserved to have a smooth and pleasant pilgrimage through life, it was he; but Fate—chance, a combination of untoward circumstances, call it what you please—took up the thread of his life and tangled it, as we shall see, into a dark web, in which all hope and happiness seemed at one time to be lost. It is his story that I am about to tell, therefore let me photograph him at once, as it were, on the title-page of my book.

He is incapable of resisting the indignity; for he has been to death's door with jungle-fever combined with sun-stroke, and is still very, very weak—so weak that it has taken him half an hour to totter from his cabin to the spot where he now reclines, wrapped in his regimental cloak, and gazing over the darkening sea westward, far westward! towards the home he has not seen for years—that he may never see again!

Did he stand upright, he would measure at least five feet eleven, and his wasted limbs, that are now extended in such lamentable helplessness upon the deck, were, a few weeks ago, full of grace and strength. He has fought under Havelock—he has marched with Chamberlayne—he has borne the whole brunt of the mutiny. He is one of that scant band of heroes who kept the tiger at bay—hurling him back, in spite of all his frantic bounds, till England arose in her might and strangled the bloody brute in his lair! He has won the Victoria Cross, and by and by, when the armies are amalgamated, will be made a Brevet-Major, if he has a friend at the Horse Guards to remind the Authorities of his services. Oh, his country is proud of him—and very grateful too, of course! Though, being a country of a naturally phlegmatic temperament, she does not give way to her feelings very warmly.

The young soldier's face is very grave, and his fine brown eyes, which are unnaturally bright just now, have rather a hard expression. His brow is calm and massive, but his mouth, though almost overshadowed by his tawny moustache, gives a look to the lower part of his face which is quite at variance with the sternness of its upper features. Wait until he smiles, and the stern look will melt away, and one of almost womanly softness take its place. To a fresh acquaintance, Stephen Frankland's manner is not pleasant: he is cold and haughty, especially with men. No one values the good-will of companions and comrades more than he does; and I think that his reserve springs more from shyness than from pride, or any other feeling. He values friendship so highly, that he cannot bear the idea of forcing himself on that of any one, and will not lightly admit any one to his own. But if he be slow in making friends, he is slower still in losing them; and many a raw cornet, who has complained loudly after the manner of the tribe, "that Frankland was so confoundedly bumptious," has been checked by the best men in the regiment, and told to wait till he knew him better before he repeated such an opinion. It is a great pity that people will go about masquerading in manners which do not belong to them; but my hero is a mortal man, and subject to all the diseases, mental and bodily, that flesh is heir to. So he will be introduced to you to-morrow. Bow stiffly, say half a dozen chilly common-places; and if you go away disgusted with his reserve and seek his society no more—if you are a good sort of fellow, and worth cultivating—he will take to heart your not liking him, and be doubly cold to the next man he meets by way of mending matters. Not the sort of temperament, this, with which to get on well in the world. Too sensitive and self-accusing a great deal, as I am afraid we shall find before long.

Have you ever met with a serious accident in a foreign country, or felt some illness creeping over you when amongst strangers? If you have, did not a wild yearning seize you to hurry home, in spite of all assurances that you would be safer and better tended where you were? If you have not, believe me that it is no use arguing with the stricken one

who has this feeling upon him. He craves for *home*—home, no matter how humble it may be; and staggers thitherward with the unreasoning terror which makes a wounded bird drag itself in torture from the hand that would assuage its pain, to seek some well-known haunt wherein to die.

Well! Home is distant, and the blow has fallen before it can be reached. The sufferer has to praise the All Merciful for a great escape; for the crisis is over and the danger past. But will he admit that it is possible for him to become quite well away from *home*? Does he believe that there can be any medicine so potent for his good as the sight of old familiar scenes, the sound of old familiar voices, the sympathy, above all, of those he loves? I think not! Happy are you if you have never known that weary, incurable disease—the home-sickness, of the sick. I know of poor people who have died in squalid cellars, because they were their *homes*, rather than enter the hospitals, in which they might have been cured in a week. I know of men who have passed all their lives abroad, whose associations, friends, and fame all belong to foreign scenes, but who have tottered back in their old age to the home-land that knows them not—merely because it *is* the home-land—to enrich it with their hard-won wealth, and ask of it nothing but a grave. Ay! we may philosophise, and scoff, and make merry, with these and other human softnesses. Let us crown with bays the clever fellows who are so fond of depicting the morbid anatomy of *Homes*—who delight in tearing down the gay hangings from the walls—who smash through the gay gilding and the lath-and-plaster, and disclose to us, with many a chuckle of triumph, the hidden closet where the skeleton grins and clanks his horrid bones. Ah, these are something like writers! Their pens are lancets, their ink a fluid caustic, and every printed page a cataplasm. How the great world smarts and simpers as they ply their trade—each half of it enjoying the discomfiture of the other! I think, though, that there be pure homes and home influences in the land, after all; but, bless my soul! it would be very insipid work to treat only of these. *Eau sucré* is mawkish tippie at the best of times. A squeeze of lemon and a dash of something out of the *gardé de vin* improves the flavour wonderfully.

The home-sickness was strong upon Stephen Frankland as the sun went down upon this pleasant July evening, for the home of his boyhood had been a very happy one—a breezy, crag-bound, leafy, stream-girt home, snugly settled half-way down a Derbyshire valley, with a great rugged Tor that was always ready to do battle with the north-east wind on its behalf; to its rear, and in all other directions, fat meadow-lands, and hills with dark pine woods hanging on their slopes; and fern-carpeted dells, and tangled coppices, with the restless Wye lacing all the beauties of the landscape together with a silver thread—a home in which he had been a free and happy country lad, revelling in field-sports and feats of strength and daring, which had made him the ready and dashing soldier that he was before the fever struck him down. He has closed his eyes now, in his

painful weakness, and the whole panorama floats across his mind's eye. There is the field in which he made that famous double-shot of which his father was so proud. Did he not have preserved and stuffed the two unfortunate partridges who fell victims to his boy's precocious skill? and are they not now hanging up in a glass-case in the hall? There is the quiet pool in the bend of the river into which he used to plunge in the summer time, to the terror of his little brother Frank; and the shady nook, hard by, where afterwards he would loil, half-dressed, all the blazing mid-day, hidden by the tall ferns, reading the lives of the great soldiers and sailors who were his heroes, or half-terrifying, half-delighting, his childish companion with wondrous tales about giants and fairies, and other inhabitants of the dear old realms of Fancy! There, far away to the right, over the grass land, is the fence at which he got that ugly fall out hunting, when he mounted Lord Harkington's new chesnut mare—merely because some one had said that he could not ride her. The hot, blundering brute bolted with her head in the air, and crashed right into the middle of the double post and rails without rising an inch, rolling over her rider, and nearly killing him in her frantic struggles to rise. There again, close to the house, hanging from the sycamore tree, is the swing where he and Laura Coleman used to swing each other when they were children together, and where he wished her good-bye, and pressed into her reluctant hand a little gold pencil-case as a parting gift the evening before he left for India! There is Bill Grant's, the head keeper's, cottage. It was in the somewhat musty kitchen of that tenement that he smoked his first pipe, procured from Bill with much diplomacy, and not without a bribe. Ah! will he ever forget that first pipe? At a certain period of its enjoyment, what would he have given to Bill *not* to have had it? There, close by the privet hedge on the lawn, is old Ponto's grave. Poor old Ponto! Would he have been a better dog, in his life, if he had known what a grand funeral he was to have when all was over? There is the wood—that on the hill yonder, near the bean-field, where they had that tough tustle with the poachers on Christmas-Eve! And there—there—there! far and near, all around, is some spot full of old recollections for Stephen Frankland, on which his memory loves to dwell. It dwells on them, and those with whom they are associated, as they were in the careless old times which are stamped on his mind. He cannot realize them as they are. He has heard that Bill Grant is not head-keeper now. The poor fellow has had a paralytic stroke, and is a hopeless cripple; still his pupil finds himself planning a long day's shooting, which he intends to have in company with his old tutor in woodcraft, directly the season comes round again. He cannot think of Laura as a grown-up woman who has been engaged to be married. She is ever, for him, the shy, timid child who cried when she was swung too high. And Frank, his little brother! the loved companion of all his expeditions—poor, gentle, delicate little Frank—whom he has carried for miles upon his shoulders, rather than he should

be disappointed of being present at some steeple-chase, or cricket-match, or other sport that he wished to see—little Frank came of age a year ago! He was but a little boy, and small and weak for his age, when Stephen sailed for India. There was a wide gulf between them then; the one was quite a man, the other still a child. Time had bridged it over now, and the seven and a-half years that separated their ages was lost in their mutual manhood. A pleased smile played round Stephen's lips and glistened in his eyes, as he tried to picture little Frank as the great country gentleman, and Justice of the Peace, Deputy-Lieutenant, and High Sheriff of the County—posts of dignity which letters from home had informed him his brother was soon to fill. For, as will presently appear more distinctly, Frank, though his father's younger son, was sole heir to Tremlett Towers and all its lands, whilst Stephen, the first-born, would inherit a baronetcy, an honourable title attached to very few possessions of any sort for its support.

The idea of envying Frank his good fortune never entered his half-brother's mind; the possibility that Tremlett Towers might not be his home, to come and go in as he pleased all the days of his life, never occurred to him for a moment. How should it? Never by word, or act, or look, has he been reminded of his position under his father's roof. He knew it well enough; his father had broken it to him long before he left, and I think it reflected much credit on his stepmother that he soon forgot what he was told. Now, perhaps, you begin to see how matters stand. He was his father's companion in all the sports of the field, his *alter ego* with the tenantry and servants. He was his mother's right hand in her garden, the distributor of her bounty in the village, her representative in a dozen different ways; for this lady was not given to exertion, and was fond of doing what she did by deputy. His wishes were always anticipated, his orders never questioned. He was an universal favourite, the bright-eyed, hearty lad! Like all brave men, with a high sense of duty, he thought little of what he had done, otherwise it might have occurred to him that the news of deeds which had won him the highest object of a soldier's ambition, the Cross for Valour, would quite dissipate the clouds with which absence sometimes hides a vacant chair. But, as I said before, the idea from which such a thought would spring never occurred to him. He longed for home with a sick man's longing as the sun went down that July evening. And so vividly did home and home faces come back to him, that it seemed as though he had never really left them, and that the wonders of the strange land in which his lot had been cast, and all its recent horrors, were the baseless fabric of a vision which was passing away.

He was aroused from such day-dreaming by a tap upon the shoulder, and, turning round, saw that a square-built man, with a jolly, weather-beaten face, and dressed in the handsome uniform of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, had taken a seat by his side.

"Glad to see you on deck, Sir!" said the officer. "I am Captain

Stevenson, of this ship, at your service. How do you feel yourself to-night—picking up your crumbs, eh? There now, don't move; I've got plenty of room where I am, thank ye!" And the jolly seaman kindly pressed Stephen Frankland back into the reclining position from which he had started, and smoothed the pillow that supported his head.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" he added, when this was done—"anything you want in your cabin?"

"Thank you very much!" Stephen replied; "I have everything I require, and I shall soon cease to be the troublesome fellow that I am sure I must have been to you all. I feel as though every breath of this cool sea-breeze was putting new life into me."

"To be sure," said the Captain; "so it does. Why, I've had young fellows carried aboard further gone than you were—and *you* hadn't much to spare on this side Davy Jones's locker when we left Calcutta; but, Lord bless you! as soon as ever they can crawl on deck they sit gasping in the fresh air like a shoal of blue-fish, and are on their pins again calling out for bitter beer before we sight Perim!"

"How long shall we be before we sight Perim?" asked the sick man after a pause.

"How long will you be before you get to your bitter beer? you mean." said the Captain with a jovial laugh; "But you will get a chill if you stay out any longer. The wind is freshening, and you have had quite as much of it as you can bear for the first time: the Doctor would tell you so if he were here. You had better turn in, and—Ha! just in the nick of time!" he continued, as a tall figure moved silently out of the shadow of the hatchway, and took its stand by Stephen's side. "Here's your servant come to help you in."

"Hush!" exclaimed the invalid in a quick whisper; "he is not my servant."

Captain Stevenson opened his mouth and raised his eyelids, and so made those expressive features reply—"Who the deuce, then, is he?" as plainly as though he had articulated the words. The question was lost upon the new comer, so busily was he engaged in collecting the books, cushions, and other articles which fell as the sick man rose and prepared to pass below; but as he rose, he laid his finger on his lip with a meaning look, until the old man had descended the companion-ladder, and then replied in a whisper—

"You will think it very odd, but I know absolutely nothing about him, beyond this—I owe my life to his care! I will try and find out who he is to-night."

CHAP. II.

HOW CAPTAIN FRANKLAND AND MR. BRANDRON COMPARED NOTES.

ARRIVED in his cabin, Stephen Frankland flung himself heavily upon the cot with an impatient moan. He had only descended some eight or ten

steps, and walked as many yards; but so feeble was his state that the exertion, slight as it was, proved almost too much for him. I think the worst part of an illness is when you have gained strength enough to know how weak it has made you. His attendant, who had followed, carefully measured out some tonic medicine, and handed it, without a word. He then placed everything that might be required within his reach, and silently proceeded to set the cabin in order for the night. This done, he was about to retire, when Frankland raised himself, and laid a hand upon his arm—

“Don’t leave me,” he said—“that is, I mean, if you do not want to go on deck again.”

The person thus addressed paused, and held the cabin-door half shut behind him as he turned towards the cot.

“You see I am getting all right again,” Frankland continued, in a cheerful tone. “Yesterday I could scarcely stand, and to-night I have walked ever so far, all by myself. In a very few days I shall be off the sick-list altogether.”

“I am glad to find you so hopeful,” was the grave reply; “take care, though, that you do not over-exert yourself. You know what the Doctor said, and if I stay here with you, you must promise not to talk.”

“That is exactly what I want to do. It’s all bosh saying that I must not talk. Why, I haven’t coughed once for I don’t know how long! I am going to ask you to redeem the promise that you made, I think, two days ago. My head is getting clearer now, and it worries me awfully not to know what has passed. I lay awake all last night trying in vain to recall the past; and I am sure I shall not sleep to-night unless you help me. I do assure you that I am quite strong enough now to hear all you like to tell—to ask what I so much want to know.”

His attendant closed the door softly, and drawing a trunk close to the cot, seated himself so that the wan detaining hand still rested on his arm.

“Well?”

The sick man was a little disconcerted by that monosyllabic reply to his anxiously urged request, but more so by the sad, searching gaze with which the speaker regarded him.

It was not easy to fix his exact age; his face and figure were so wasted by the ravages of the Indian climate. He looked sixty, at least, but was probably some years younger. He was unusually tall and gaunt, with a square massive brow, and restless, though earnest eyes. A few flowing locks of iron-grey hair, thrown back from his temples and passed behind each ear, would have given an air of benevolence to almost any other face; but there was a fixed sternness upon his pale features which never left them even whilst he was performing acts of womanly tenderness for his patient—a sternness which did not reflect anger or

dislike, but betokened the absence of all softer feelings from a heart that had once been their home.

Frankland sank back again into a reclining posture as the old man took his seat; and when the hand that had been laid on his slipped downwards, and the arm swung heavily beside the cot, the patient attendant took it in both his own, and, regarding it with a strange cynical smile, pressed it almost tenderly and placed it softly on the coverlet.

There was no light in the cabin, and the shades of evening were rapidly closing in. After waiting some moments to see if his companion would volunteer the information which he so much desired, Stephen again broke the silence which had become painful to him—

"I am afraid," he said, "that I have lost all count of time. I am conscious that I have been a long time ill, and that you have all along tended me with a care and patience for which I cannot account. I feel that I owe you my life, and do not even know your name."

"My name is Brandon—John Everett Brandon. I am an uncovenanted servant of the East India Company, if it still exists, and I am going ho—I am going to England upon leave. I have done for you what any other man would have done for any other man whom he found as I found you."

"But where *did* you find me? That is what I want to know," Stephen said in an excited tone, and starting up into a sitting posture. "When was it?—and where? Why am I not with my regiment? How is it that I am here? All this is a blank to me, in which my mind goes wandering till it is lost in distraction."

"This will never do! Compose yourself, pray, or I must leave you," said Brandon; "you shall know all you require; but have patience. There now," he added, as Stephen sank into his former position; "tell me, as quietly as you can, what you can last remember, and I will recount the rest—at least, as far as I know of it."

"You want to know how I was wounded?"

"I *want* to know nothing," the old man replied, with a smile; "but you must tell me where to begin, or I shall be saying what you know already."

Frankland closed his eyes, and paused for a moment to collect his thoughts. "You have heard," he then said, "of that affair of ours at the Raptce?"

"Where your regiment and the —th charged the rebel Sowars in the middle of the river? Yes."

"Well; no matter what we did," said Frankland, "or how I got through; I managed to keep to my saddle, and when poor old Cherry—(that's my charger, I wonder what has become of him?)—scrambled with me up the opposite bank, I saw some score or so of the enemy forming on the flat ground close by. I collected a few of our fellows, and we rode straight at them—straight through them, by Jove! too; and when they

scattered right and left, I saw that their leader was Lal Roogee—a villain whose life I had sworn to have if ever I saw him again; and so—But I am wandering on too quickly. I must tell you why I made this vow. There was a young cornet of ours—a dashing, handsome boy, a prime favourite with all of us, and a special chum of mine. His name was Charley Treherne, the only son of a clergyman down in Kent, near Westborough.”

Brandron started, and a crimson flush spread for an instant over his pale face.

“What makes you start? Do you know the family?”

“No, nor heard of it. I know the country in which they live, that is all—go on.”

“Well, Charley was on sick-leave in the hills when the mutiny broke out, and had only just re-joined us at the time of which I am speaking. It was a few days—perhaps a week—before the Raptée business, that he saw the enemy for the first and last time. There was a fort to be taken—one of those that our Government were fools enough to let a set of rascally Rajahs arm and occupy, to turn against us at the very first opportunity. The infantry were, for a wonder, led up to the right side of it—the rear, and we were posted in the front, hidden in a little wood, to cut off the scoundrels in their inevitable bolt. I had dismounted, and was watching the fort through a field-glass—and so was Charley, but he was on horse-back. I had not to watch long! Crack! went half-a-dozen shells into the middle of the place—Crash! went the gate, blown into lucifer-matches by a powder-bag fixed there by little Teddy Scott, of the Engineers, as coolly as though he were hanging up a picture in the drawing-room. In went three companies of the gallant —rd at one end, and out came about two hundred Pandies at the other, who scattered themselves helter-skelter into the jungle. It was no use charging after *them*. But a better enemy soon came in sight. An entire regiment of horse that had only mutinied a few days before, drew up in good order, and to our intense satisfaction prepared to march off our way. At their head was a man that I had known by sight, and had heard too much of. ‘Charley,’ I whispered, ‘do you see that fellow on the white barb, with a shirt of mail over his tunic? That’s Lal Roogee.’

“‘And what is the Roogee famous for?’ asked poor Charley, in his playful way.

“‘Hush!’ I said; ‘this is no joking matter. That is the fiend who killed poor Clayton’s young wife. He set fire to her muslin dress, and the devils that were with him hacked her to pieces with their swords, as she ran shrieking through the compound.’

“I shall never forget the expression on Charley’s face when he heard those words. The poor lady had been very kind to him when he first came out, and there, proudly riding at the head of the troop that her husband once commanded, was her murderer! It was as much as I could

do to hold the excited boy: he would have ridden out, then and there, single-handed; to cut him down. At last we got the word 'Officers to the front!' The word was given to charge, and away we went. It was a regular race; but my charger stumbled over a fallen tree, and this threw me back almost equal with the men. I then saw that Charley was charging straight on Lal Roogee. I saw his sabre glimmer in the air; I saw the rebel sowar rein back his horse to avoid the stroke; I saw him wave his sword, as it seemed to me, only *towards* Charley as he whirled by—and then I was in the thick of it myself—doing my duty, I hope—till the recall was sounded. Then my serjeant came up, and, with a tear on his bronzed cheek, told me what had really happened. The apparently idle wave of that practised villain's sword had done deadly work. The sharp curve of the blade had just touched poor Charley's neck, and inflicted a deep wound through which, long before we reached the spot where he fell, he had bled to death. We buried him in the wood that night; and I took his sword, a lock of his hair, and a Bible with his mother's name in it, that I found in his pack, to send to his home. I do not know what has become of them. There was a vulgar cant about in England when I left, that, to be a dashing soldier, one must be a *roué* and a scamp. A braver and more promising officer than Charley Treherne never drew sword, and he lived and died a Christian gentleman."

"I think you will find the things you mention among your baggage," said Brandon; "I especially noticed the Bible in the palanquin with you when—But I, too, am wandering; go on—what about Lal Roogee?"

"I cannot say how he escaped that day. We met again, as I have told you, on the banks of the Raptee. I was nearly wild with excitement as it was, but the sight of his black face nearly maddened me. I don't suppose that what followed occupied more than two minutes from first to last, but in this time a host of recollections flashed through my mind. I saw poor Mary Clayton with her little baby on her lap. I heard her putting in a kind word—as she often had done—for the villains who afterwards took away her life. I was at mess, and it was the first night that Charley joined us. I was hunting, shooting, reading, listening in the verandah of our Indian house to his merry songs and ringing laugh; I was kneeling beside his grave; I was vowing to avenge him;—better than that, I was plunging along upon a fresh horse, with only a few yards of level ground between me and the man who had killed him. What exultation I felt as I gained upon him—for this time he did not stand at bay, as the nature of the ground had forced him to do on the former occasion, but was riding for his life. Nearer and nearer I came, till I could see the whites of his evil eyes as he turned and fired one of his long pistols at me. He missed, and the next moment I was on him! My sword was in the air; I had risen in my stirrups to give impetus to the stroke, when a sharp pang, like the prick

of a pin, ran through my body from head to heel! Then came a dull, crushing blow, as though a truss of hay had fallen from a height upon my head, and then darkness—a vague sensation of pain *somewhere*, and a dreary unconsciousness of what was going on until I woke up, as it were, a few days ago, and found myself in this cabin, and you seated there, as you are now, by my side. I must have been cut down from behind.”

“So you were,” said Brandron, when Frankland had thus concluded his account, “but not by a mortal enemy. You were unhorsed by a sun-stroke. In addition to this, those who had charge of you, whoever they were, managed to let you be attacked by jungle fever.”

“How do you know?”

“Because you were very bad with jungle fever when I found you.”

“But where did you find me, and when?”

“On the grand trunk road, seven miles from Agra.”

“Will you tell me under what circumstances?”

“In my own way, if you will not interrupt me. I am a man of few words, and will not keep you long. I was travelling by palqui. My bearers told me there was a palqui on the road before us unattended, and that there was a tiger trying hard to overturn it. I shot that tiger—I opened that palqui, and there found you in delirium. Your bearers had fled at the sight of the beast, whose skin I will show you one day. I got other bearers, had you carried on to Agra, and gave you over to the Staff Surgeon. He told me that nothing but a sea voyage would save your life, so I brought you to Calcutta, shipped you on board this vessel, and here you are.”

“But my leave—my papers—my debts——?”

“Were all settled by an officer of your own regiment, who was at Calcutta, and helped me to get you off. You have two years’ leave, and all your baggage is on board. So you see that I have done very little for you. Your way happened to be my way, and we travelled together—that is all. As for your recovery—saving your life, as you call it—that is no business of mine. You have a good constitution, and were lucky enough to fall into the hands of a doctor who left it alone. I have told you all I know. If you want to learn what happened to you between the times of your falling at the Raptee and my finding you near Agra, you must apply to some one else. The probability is that you were sent off about a fortnight after your fall. The rest of the time had been taken up in the journey.”

“I want to hear no more,” said Frankland; “I have heard enough to know that I owe you my life twice over. Like you, I am a man of few words in these matters; words are but poor agents to express the gratitude I feel. I must find other means of paying the deep debt I have incurred; and there are those in England, Mr. Brandron, who will help me in its discharge. May I ask in what part of England is your home?”

“I have no home. I have been in India twenty years.”

"I mean, where do your friends reside?"

"I have no friends. Have I not told you that I have been away twenty years? Before I had left twenty days no one cared to inquire whether I was dead or alive. Yes, there was *one*," he added in a low voice; "but his anxiety about me would have been best satisfied if he had heard that I was dead."

"You speak bitterly."

"I feel bitterly—that is, when I am fool enough to give way to my feelings, but that is not often."

"Pray, do not misjudge me," said Frankland, touched by the sadness of his tone, and the deepening of the settled melancholy on his face, "or think that I am indulging idle curiosity in pursuing a subject which I see is not a pleasant one; but I must naturally take a deep interest in one to whom I owe so much. I am going to travel overland. A dozen chances may part us any day. Will you not let me know where I shall find you at home—I mean, where you will stay when you arrive in England?"

"That I cannot do."

"You mean you *will* not," said Frankland, somewhat nettled at what he took for a rebuff. "Be it so, then; I will press you no further."

"I mean," replied Brandron, taking no notice of the impatient gesture with which Frankland had turned from him, "exactly what I say. I cannot tell you where I shall stay when I land in England, because I shall be there so short a time that I shall have no settled abode."

"Where will you go then?"

"Back to India."

"Back to India," exclaimed Frankland, "at your age! I thought—"

"I have only six months' leave," said Brandron, interrupting him. "My superiors imagine that I shall spend it in the hills, and no one is aware that I intended to take this voyage. Were my purpose known in certain quarters, perhaps it might have been defeated. As it is, I take my own course. Deducting the time which will be spent going and returning to my post, I shall have about ten weeks in England. I could do all I have to do in one, and shall probably return as soon as I have done it."

"Do you like India, then? Do you not care to remain in your own country as long as you can?"

"All places are the same to me," said Brandron, gloomily.

"Then, why this flying visit?"

"Because," replied Brandron with vehemence, a strange light flashing into his eyes as he spoke, "*I go to do an act of justice.*"

Frankland started up, astonished at this sudden change in the manner of his companion, and for the first time he eluded his gaze.

"You have struck a key-note, you see," Brandron said, turning his face aside; "but pray do not dwell upon it. Come, let us change the subject."

"I am most unfortunate in my questions," Frankland rejoined; "but you cannot think that I would intentionally touch upon what would give you pain? I will not offend again."

"You cannot," replied his companion in a gayer manner than he had as yet assumed. "Avoid this one subject, and the more questions you ask me the better I shall be pleased. I have lived so long alone in out-of-the-way places, where I have scarcely seen a white face from one year's end to another, that I have become uncommunicative and gloomy. I cannot change my nature all of a sudden. I was a pleasant companion once, I believe, and may be so again: meanwhile, bear with an old fellow's weakness, and, with one restriction, ask me what you please. It is quite new to meet with any one who takes an interest in me, as you appear to do; and it is a pleasure to gratify it."

"There is one thing I should very much like to ask you," said Frankland, after a pause; "but I am afraid it approaches forbidden ground."

"Never mind, if it does not touch it."

"I hope it will not; if it does, say so, and I will not urge it."

"Go on."

"You tell me that you are going to England to do an act of justice?"

Brandron's brow grew dark.

"Hear me out," Frankland continued quickly, checking the gesture intended to silence him. "Hear me out first. In performing this, you will do one of two things—perhaps both. You will punish some one who has committed an injustice, or you will benefit some one who has been wronged. Which is it?"

"Both."

"Then," replied Frankland quickly, "you will not be, as you say, without a friend; for you will win the gratitude and love of the person whose cause you uphold."

"It is too late," said Brandron, sorrowfully; "too late: years ago it might have been as you say, but now it is too late:"—and pressing the hand which had fallen in sympathy upon his own, he rose with a deep sigh and left the cabin.

The young dragoon regained health and strength rapidly, and soon began to mix with his fellow-passengers, and to join in the pursuits with which they beguiled the monotony of the voyage. In these, the stern companion of his hours of sickness could not take part, for certain mystic reasons, better known to the skilled in Anglo-Indian etiquette than to this ignoramus. It has been whispered to me that there are distinctions between the rank of this officer and that, and that the rules of precedence to be obeyed by Mrs. General A, and Mrs. Resident B, are as subtle and irremovable as the laws of caste among the natives, which those enlightened persons join in deploring. I am not going to enter into details upon this subject, or I shall have Lieutenant-Colonel Capsicum down upon me like a shot. "Why, blank the fellow!" that distinguished officer would cry to

his chums in the smoking-room of the Circumnavigators' Club, if the blundering lines were printed in this book, "Blank his insolence! Here is a fellow who pretends to write about Indian life and manners, and, blank him, he does not know the most ordinary usages of society!" He does not pretend to any such knowledge, my dear Sir. He only deals with facts in these matters, and leaves his readers to account for them how they may. He only knows that Mr. Brandron was shunned by the ladies and gentlemen in the saloon—Stephen Frankland alone excepted; and ventures to inquire of the gallant Lieutenant-Colonel, if he had been returning from India in company with an elderly person not very well dressed, but still having the demeanour and manners of a gentleman, who was openly known as one of the "uncovenanted,"—whether he would cut in with him at whist, or introduce him to his wife? The author does not pause for a reply, but goes straight on.

Frankland perceived what was going on a little too late to take the sting out of it. Brandron had ceased those attentions towards him which had led Captain Stevenson to imagine that the grave old man was his servant. This, however, he attributed to the fact that he was no longer in a condition to require them, and did not notice the altered manner of his friend; but when the latter hinted, in his cold cynical way, that seeking his society would lower the young officer in the estimation of his new acquaintances, and requested him to let their intimacy die out, all Frankland's warm nature revolted against such a policy and its cause.

"Confound their exclusiveness!" he exclaimed: "may I not choose my own friends?"

"It is not always wise to do so," said Brandron, drily.

"You do not want to be friends with me any longer then?" rejoined Frankland, hurt at his coolness.

"I did not say so."

"But you keep on hinting that we had better not be seen together. I will force myself upon no man; but I wonder you ever took an interest in me, and acted as you did, if you intended to throw me off like this."

Brandron smiled grimly. "Did you ever fish a fly out of your cream-pot?" he asked.

"What nonsense!"

"And help him to rub his wings clean on the table-cloth?"

"What *do* you mean?"

"And feel a sort of weakness towards him as though he belonged to you whilst he was weak and crippled, till he got all right again, and buzzed away to join the other flies upon the window?"

"Well," said Frankland, with a smile, "I might have done such a thing."

"I actually have," Brandron replied; "metaphorically speaking, I have fished *you* out of the cream-pot; I have watched *you* rub your wings clean; I have had a sort of weakness towards you whilst you were weak and

crippled ; but now you have buzzed away, and joined the other flies, and there's an end of it."

Frankland looked him hard in the face—looked through the cynical grin, and saw that there was a covert smile of kindness on the other side gleaming out like the sun from behind a cloud. He merely said, very quietly, "There is *not* an end of it—at least so far as the fly is concerned."

Brandron took a turn up and down the deck, and when he came back to where Stephen stood, he laid his hand upon his shoulder without saying a word, but Stephen knew, or thought he knew, what was meant. It was not till the next day that he said, *apropos* of nothing, "Frankland, I do believe that you are an honest man." What could he have been thinking about in the interim ?

"I should be a worthless cur, Sir, if I were not—to you."

"As it is," said Brandron, smiling, "you are only a fly."

"And still on the table-cloth?"

"Well ; have it so if you like."

And the subject was never returned to again.

Nor was any allusion made to the topic which had broken off their first conversation in Frankland's cabin, when he had unwittingly touched the mainspring of his friend's melancholy ; but he gleaned from subsequent talk that the business that Brandron had in England would take him in the first instance to the neighbourhood of Westborough ; and putting this and that together, he was able to account for the start and change of manner which the mention of that place, whilst telling Charley Treherne's sad story, had caused in his auditor. This brought him to think that Brandron might take charge of the relics of the poor boy, and deliver them to his sorrowing parents ; and Brandron accepted the commission.

"You see," Frankland said, "they'll have heard all about it by the last mail, and will hardly be in a condition to see anybody just yet. You can just leave the things, or send them, that's all. I will go later, when they will be more prepared to hear what I can tell them. It is a sad loss—poor Charley ! But it would be a farce for a stranger like me to offer consolation. Besides, my first duty is to my own family ; and every day that brings me nearer to my home, finds me more fidgety to get there." And then he began to tell Brandron of the happy life of his boyhood, and to anticipate the pleasant days he should pass amongst the well-loved faces and unforgetten scenes ; but was checked in the midst of his enthusiasm by the cynical smile and almost savage retort which it produced from his auditor. He turned away, vexed with the want of consideration he had displayed in parading his own domestic happiness before one who had not a friend or a home, and never renewed the subject—but Brandron did, some ten days afterwards. By this time they had crossed the desert, and were in sight of Malta.

"You will go straight through France, I suppose?" he inquired.

"Yes, and cross to Folkestone; but, of course, I shall send my heavy luggage round by Southampton."

"And this brother of yours, of whom you were speaking some time ago, of course he will be there to welcome you?"

"Of course *not*. He does not expect me—no one expects me. How should they? Unless, indeed," Frankland added quickly, "you wrote from India. I could not do so, as you are well aware. Did you write?"

"I did not," replied Brandon; "for at this moment I do not know where your parents live."

"I will show you," said Frankland gleefully, "before many days are over. I shall give you just one week to yourself; and then, if you do not come straight to Tremlett Towers, I shall have you taken, and brought there in custody."

A grim smile broke over Brandon's countenance, as he leant over the bulwarks and watched the foam that hissed and curdled in the steamer's wake and was lost in the distance on the calm and trackless sea; but he made no reply: and Frankland having quite made up his own mind upon the point, considered it as settled, and did not refer to it again.

One thing, however, perplexed him a little. In the course of a conversation with Captain Stevenson, shortly after their first interview, he recounted his narrow escape from being devoured alive upon the Agra road, and when he mentioned Brandon's name, "Who's he?" asked the Captain. Stephen replied, that the person whom the Captain had taken to be his servant was so called. Whereupon the Captain flushed up, and declared, that that certainly was not the name under which his passage had been taken; and begging Stephen to accompany him to his cabin, he called for the ship's books, and there it was plainly entered that the occupant of berth No. 36 had described himself as Robert Meynell, merchant, of Calcutta, and that there was no such person as John Everett Brandon, of the uncovenanted civil service, on board. But when Stephen remembered that his friend's visit to England was a secret one, he ceased to attribute any importance to this fact.

Time passed on pleasantly enough, and our travellers were approaching their journey's end very nearly, when Brandon broke a long pause by saying, suddenly,

"Shall I tell you what I am thinking of, Frankland?"

"Yes; go on."

"I'm thinking that it would be much more considerate if you were to go in person to Westborough and give old Mr. Treherne his son's sword. It may be that the news of the poor lad's death arrived by the last mail, and they will be anxious to know many things that you alone can tell them. Of course, I will fulfil my promise if you hold me to it; but it certainly seems to me that you had better come yourself."

"Does it really?"

"It does indeed. It will not delay you more than a day. Besides—and here comes the selfish part of it—as the time for carrying out this business of mine approaches, I feel strangely nervous and apprehensive; and though I cannot see how you could possibly help me, I should not be sorry to have a friend at hand. It is your own fault that I am so troublesome," he added, with a smile, "for you have taught me what weary work it is to be all alone. Will you come with me to Westborough, and then I will go with you where you please?"

"How do we get there?"

"The nearest station is Poundbridge, which is on the direct line between Dover and London. We can start thence—you to Treherne's house, I to my appointment. A few hours will suffice to settle every thing, if the man I expect is to his time. At any rate we can resume our journey the next day. Shall it be so?"

Stephen readily assented. Could he do less for a man who had saved his life twice over!

CHAP. III.

STRANGERS AT WESTBOROUGH.

How dreadful a battle would be if those engaged in it could see the course of every ball, and tell precisely when to expect the cold steel amongst their vitals! And what an unsatisfactory life we should lead in this world of ours, if we knew exactly what dangers and chances, what benefits and disasters, would follow every step we take! We can, indeed, avoid the flaring rockets, hissing shells, and other engines of destruction that advertise their advents in an unmistakable manner upon either field of action, or to which we know that we must expose ourselves if we trespass in forbidden localities. But I think, upon the whole, it is better to move straight forward in the path of duty, and take our chance amongst the hidden missiles. What is the use of dodging, when, perhaps, you dodge away from a shot that would not have hit you, right into the line of another that will, when, by remaining erect, you might have avoided both? The same thing may happen in the Battle of Life. There are rifle-pits full of expert marksmen in our streets; there are masked batteries before our country houses. The lover's walk down yonder in the shrubbery is mined under our feet. We can see the hits when our friends fall, and the explosions when the air is full of wreck and ruin. Let us not trouble ourselves about the misses. Every bullet has its billet, and ignorance of which is the very one about to settle our account is bliss indeed. Shall I stay at home? I may make the acquaintance of the girl who is to make delightful the rest of my days, or I may miss the opportunity which is to make me the happiest of men! What shall I do? It will be best, I think, to take things as they come, and go about the ordinary business of the hour without considering its fortuities, or we shall soon become

miserable cowards, unwilling to go about at all. So went Stephen Frankland. If he had known what would have been the consequences of his visit to Westborough, he certainly would have given that picturesque village the widest berth, and probably would have been not much better off in the long-run for his escape.

So Stephen went to Westborough, to hand over in person to the sorrowing father the relics of poor Charley Treherne; and, to his surprise, found his usually stern and composed companion becoming painfully nervous and apprehensive as he approached the spot. Twice only during the whole of their voyage from India had Brandron alluded to the serious business, the *act of justice*, as he had called it on board the steamer, to perform which he was paying his flying visit to England. Hitherto he had become very angry and silent when Stephen appeared even to be approaching the subject, but for the last few hours it was hardly ever off his tongue.

"Have you ever had a presentiment of evil, Frankland?" he asked, as they were about to land at Folkestone.

"No—yes—Well sometimes; but I don't know that it was ever fulfilled."

"I have one at this moment, and it is, that as sure as I put my foot on that land, I shall never leave it again."

"Then I most heartily hope it may come true," was Stephen's reply. "Why should you go out to be broiled to death again?"

"Frankland! I am going to put myself in the hands of a man whom I cannot trust—a man who has managed to silence me for twenty years, and who would not scruple to silence me for ever, if he could."

"Tush! my dear Sir. Westborough is in the county of Kent—not in the Himalaya mountains," replied his friend, gaily. "There's law in the land of England,—and *me*: why not let me assist you in this matter; you may depend upon my discretion, and I'll take good care that you are not wronged."

"No, no," said Brandron, with a sigh that ended in a shudder; "I must go through it by myself—I must go through it alone. I will do my duty, whatever may be the result. When the time comes I shall be prepared for it; it is only the coming that unsettles me a little."

It was early hours when the train reached Poundbridge, and our travellers found themselves in the inn at Westborough by mid-day. Here Brandron engaged a pleasant, cool little room, overlooking the road, and Stephen Frankland inquired his way to Mr. Treherne's house.

"Well, Sir," said the landlord, "it's about two mile from here, out Fenbury way. I don't know if I'm intruding, Sir; but was you one of the family?"

Stephen replied that he was not.

"Because," resumed his host, "I don't know as he'll see you. He

ain't seen anybody, not even the Squire, since he heard of poor Master Charley's death."

"Then he does know?" said Frankland, quickly.

"Oh, yes! The news came—Let me see, now—the news came—just a fortnight ago; it came in a letter from them as works things in India—I don't know justly what to call 'em; and it said as Master Charley was dead—nothing more. The poor old gentleman does take on above a bit; for he thinks—and it's only likely, too—that them devils of Sepoys got the poor lad prisoner, and tortured him. Ah! he *was* a nice lad, too, was Master Charley."

This intelligence determined Frankland to go on at once to the Rectory. He could, at least, give the stricken father the slight consolation that his gallant son had died a soldier's death. Imagining that the house would be near at hand, he had dismissed the fly, and was rather posed for a conveyance; for the idea of walking to his destination, be it far or near, is one which rarely occurs to a man who has spent much time in India. However, the landlord, who did a little farming, solved this difficulty by offering to lend his pony; and Captain Stephen rode out of the stable-yard of the Rising Sun astride upon an animal the sight of which would have spread consternation amongst the ranks of the crack regiment to which he belonged. But though his mount, to use an elegant expression, was a "rum 'un to look at," it was decidedly "a good 'un to go," and trotted along merrily till he brought his rider to where three cross-roads met. Now, he had been told to keep "straight on," and as each of these roads diverged at a considerable angle, he pulled up, and was puzzled which to follow. At last he proceeded down that which seemed to lead in the right direction, and had not gone far, when he saw a woman walking on in front. "All right," he said to himself, "here's some one who will show me the way," and he cantered up towards her. As he approached, she sat down upon the roadside, and began plucking the grass, platting it up in a meaningless manner. She was a full-grown woman, dressed in a common blue print, heavy boots, and battered straw bonnet, like one who labours in the fields; but she had the face of a child.

"Please tell me which is the way to Kernden?" asked Stephen.

The woman looked up vaguely.

"Perhaps you don't live about here?" he asked, thinking he might be inquiring of a stranger.

The woman's countenance instantly lit up with a gleam of intelligence.

"I live at the third cottage opposite the well, a mile and a bit from Westborough."

There was a strange accuracy in the address, and it was spoken quickly, as a child would repeat a lesson that she had been taught—galloping quickly over the beginning, that she might not have time to forget the end.

"Then please show me the way to Kernden Rectory?" Frankland said.

The look of intelligence faded away, and an expression of blank wonder, not unmixed with fear, took its place.

"Can't you tell me where the clergyman lives? Don't you know Mr. Treherne?"

"Yes, yes!" she replied quickly. "Kind Mr. Treherne! why has he not come?" and she started up, and seized Stephen by his coat.

"I do not know what you mean, my good woman," he answered, gently releasing himself from her grasp; "but if you know this gentleman, as you seem to do, surely you can tell me whereabouts he lives?"

"It's no use your talking to her," said a gruff voice from behind. "Don't you see she's daft?"

Stephen, startled at the interruption, turned round and saw that he was addressed by a travelling knife-grinder, who stood leaning on his machine on the opposite side of the road. He was not a nice-looking person.

Small black eyes, set deep in his head under lowering brows—a nose which had been smashed flat in some brawl, and a jaw nearly as wide and as powerful as that of a bull-dog, are not prepossessing features. Moreover, when the new comer lifted off his fur cap to wipe his brow, it became apparent that the last person who had cut his hair had followed the style adopted in her Majesty's Gaols and Houses of Correction, rather than that which Mr. Marsh, of Piccadilly, would recommend. It was clear, too, that the operator's services had recently been in requisition. Ragged and rough, and brutal as he looked, he spoke very kindly, though, to the woman.

"Get thee whoam, Nancy gal," he said. "It's none reet for them to let ye be wandering about this gait. Ye'll be run over and hurted if ye dusn't mind. Come along a' me. I'll see thee whoam lass, come along a' me."

"Is she quite imbecile?" asked Frankland, now interested in the poor creature.

"I don't know what ye mean be imbecile. She's not roight in her mind, and she never wor. She's no bisness wi' you, nor you wi' her; and I'm a going to take her back to where she lives."

"Is that far from here?"

"None so fur, but too fur for her to be abroad these times. There's tramps about harvesting, as 'ud murder her for her boots, poor thing!"

"I was asking her the way to Kernden Rectory," said Stephen, "when you came up. Perhaps you can tell me?"

"Ay, you mun folly us if you loike. We be goin' that road, and when you see old Treherne just tell him, will you," said the knife-grinder fiercely, "that you met Jim Riley, and say that I tow'd yer that the next time I wor sent to gaol it should be for summut, not for nought as last time—d'ye hear?"

"I should try and get an honest living, and so keep out of gaol alto-

gether, if I were you," said Frankland, kindly, as he rode along at a foot's pace with his guide.

"Would yer!" the man retorted, with a scoff. "And suppose, while you was gettin' an honest living, a policeman should come to your master's shop and say—'this 'ere fellow's bin convicted of felony, turn him out?' and you *was* turned out accordin', and not having brass enough to pay for a night's lodgin', you went to sleep in a shed by the roadside, and was took up for a rogue and a vagabond, and sent to quod for fourteen days, and no one would trust you with work again? What would you do then, if you was me, eh?"

"Is that your own case?"

"Ay, it is; what do you think of it?"

"That it is a hard one. See, my man, here's five shillings for you. That will keep you out of trouble for a day or two. Where are you going now?"

"I've tramped from Maidstone to-day, and when I've seen some one about here as I wants to see," said the knife-grinder in a mollified tone as he pocketed the proffered money, "I'm off north, to Sheffield."

"To Sheffield!" said Stephen. "Do you know Durmstone?"

"Ay."

"Well, if you should be passing there and want work—But what are you?"

"A cutler by trade; but I can put my hand to a'most anything if I've a mind."

"Then, if you should go near Durmstone, call at Tremlett Towers and ask for Captain Frankland. I will see what can be done for you. Now, which turning am I to take?"

They had by this time come to the cross lanes where Stephen had missed his way.

"Well; ye'll go down there over the brook, and go forward till ye come to a plantation, when ye mun turn along it to the roight; and as soon as ye get clear of the wood ye'll see church steeple, and when ye see church steeple parson's house won't be far off. Good day, master, and thank ye! Come along, Nancy lass, gee us yer hand!" saying which he helped the imbecile over a stile into a pathway that led across the fields to a row of cottages on the high road, whilst Stephen trotted on.

Into the little garden in front of the third of these cottages Jim Riley led his charge, and knocked at the door; but there was no response. Impatient at the delay, he knocked louder, and presently a woman came running out of the next house.

"Lord bless us!" she exclaimed, "is that you, Jim! and Nancy, too! I'm so glad. She ain't been in all the mornin', and we was a'most afeerd she was lost."

"Why don't the old 'un take better care on her, then!" said Riley, gruffly. "She ought to be ashamed of hersel—she ought; lettin' a poor daft thing like her run loose about the place."

"Why, don't you know what has happened?" asked the neighbour, in a tone of astonishment.

"How should I? I only came out this mornin'."

"The old 'un's dead."

"Dead?"

"Died the day before yesterday. Overseer's going to have her buried a Sunday, and they're a coming to take Nancy there to the work'us to-morrow."

Riley staggered, and almost fell, as he reiterated the word "dead!" and it was some moments before he recovered his old reckless bearing.

"I must go in. Who's got the key?" he muttered, at last, in a husky voice.

The neighbour replied that it had been left in her charge, and ran to get it. Riley snatched it roughly from her hand, and let himself into the darkened cottage.

It was a humble place enough, consisting of a kitchen with a tiled floor, and a small sleeping-room above; but everything about it was wonderfully neat and clean, and there were indications of a refined way of living, here and there, which you could not expect to find under so poor a roof. The little garden in the front, too, was laid out with much good taste, and flowers of a superior class flourished in the well-kept beds.

Riley was evidently no stranger in the little cottage. He strode through the kitchen, opened the door which concealed the narrow stair leading to the sleeping-room, and though it was quite dark, mounted it without pause or stumble, and stood beside the bed. In a while he stood motionless, with ashen lips and loudly-beating heart, gazing upon the form which the white sheet covered but could not conceal. Then he drew the covering aside and scanned the frigid features closely.

"Dead," he repeated, "dead! and with strangers and parsons about her to the last, I'll be bound. Curse them! If I had been free, she'd have told me all; she said she would before she died. Has she told aught to any one else?"

The sturdy tramp had passed most of his life upon the road. He had visited many strange places, and seen many strange things. There were few people who could enlighten Jim Riley upon subjects connected with any one of his multifarious callings. What, then, could it be that he desired so much to hear from a lone woman who had not quitted that quiet Kentish hamlet for nearly twenty years! What could she have known to interest him! and why should he look so black and fierce when struck by the thought that her knowledge had been confided to another, before Death laid his cold finger on her lips! These are knots in my TANGLED SKEIN which we must not now attempt to loosen. The tramp remained lost in thought by the bedside, till poor Nancy, terrified at being left all alone in the gathering darkness, plucked him by the skirt, and told him, in her vague disjointed way, that it was no use, mother would not wake:

she had tried, had shaken her hard, but she would not stir. They must get supper without her.

They were about to do so, when the neighbour already mentioned came in, and told them that it was no use hunting about, all the victuals had been used up the day before; but if Nancy would come in to her place, the girl was welcome to what she and her old man had got. She also proposed that Nancy should sleep with their children. "One more," said the kind-hearted woman, "won't make no such great difference, and it 'ud scare the poor thing worse than she is to be left alone up there" pointing to the room which Riley had just left. "You, Jim," she added, "can make yourself comfortable here in the arm-chair, and we'll send you a bit of victuals and a drop o' cider presently." Jim Riley was evidently better known than trusted in that locality.

He made no objection whatever to spend the night where he was, and when he had discussed the supper provided by the next-door neighbour, he lit his pipe, and smoked away very contentedly in the dark, till all was quiet and the neighbours on either side had retired to rest. Then he rose; and from a drawer in his knife-grinding machine, which he had drawn in after him when Nancy went out, he took a lantern, and having lighted it, proceeded to search every nook of the cottage. He made a clean sweep of every shelf, carefully examining each crock and tin before he put it up again; and when he came to any box or cupboard that was locked, he had recourse again to his machine, which seemed to have the faculty of producing skeleton keys, jemmies, screwdrivers, files, and other instruments for opening places of security at will.

He found very little of any interest or value until he had opened one of those very palpable depositaries called "secret drawers," in the deceased woman's work-box. There he found a letter, some silver money, a broken brooch, a locket containing the miniature of a young and beautiful girl, a curious old needle-book with covers made of gold filagree-work, in the centre of which were what seemed to be initials and a crest, but the little shield, upon which they were engraved, was so worn, that more intelligent eyes than Riley possessed could not have deciphered them. The tramp eagerly siezed these last-named articles before he saw the letter, but having perceived it, instantly laid them down and opened it. It contained a five-pound Bank of England note, but no other inclosure; was directed to the owner of the work-box, and the post-mark showed that it had come from London, and that she had received it two weeks before her death. Riley knotted up in his handkerchief the brooch, the locket, and the needle-book, left the bank-note and the money in the drawer, and having carefully wrapped the envelope in some leaves which he tore from an old Bible, proceeded with his search. He even went so far as to examine the tiles which composed the floor, to see if any one of them had been recently removed—and daylight found him still searching.

In the mean time, Frankland had found his way to the Rectory, and as

he expected, was denied to the Rector. The young ladies were at home, the servants told him, and Mr. Cuthbert; but "Master could not see any visitors." Further inquiry proved that Mr. Cuthbert was the clergyman's nephew, and to him Stephen sent in his card. Time to deliver it had barely passed when a door was thrown open, and a young man dressed in deep mourning bounced into the hall, and exclaimed:

"What! Steeve!"

Upon which Frankland started, grasped his extended hand, and cried in the same tone—

"What! Cuddy! Who on earth would have thought of seeing you here?"

"Why, don't you know that Mr. Treherne is my uncle? But what in the name of wonder brings *you* this way? I thought you were in In—— Ah, I see—poor Charley! Oh! Steeve, is it true?" he asked eagerly.

"I am sorry to say it is—quite true."

"We had no hope; but I thought I saw something in your face that roused one for a moment."

"It was pleasure at meeting an old chum so unexpectedly,—nothing more. I can relieve some of your fears respecting the manner of his death; that is all."

"And you have come all this way to tell us! Dear old man! But it is just like you. Don't let us stand here, though. Come in, and I will introduce you to my cousins, and they will break your arrival to my uncle."

Stephen's name had gone before him to the drawing-room. It was a well-known name there, for the lost brother's letters had been full of it. And in their happier hours pretty Gertrude and Maud Treherne had often tried to picture to each other what this stern, honest, tender and hearty Captain, whose praises Charley had never tired of singing, could be like. In playful mood they had drawn fancy portraits of their brother's idol, in which Maud pictured him with superhuman beauty, and represented him in the act of performing prodigies of valour; whilst merry Gertrude delighted to put him into all sorts of ridiculous positions. There is a sheet of drawing-paper extant, upon which various passages in the life of Captain Frankland are spiritedly depicted. The best of these, perhaps, are the sketches entitled "Captain Frankland feels it hot," "Captain Frankland finds it difficult to put on his boots," as well he might, for they are brimful of snakes—and "Pig-sticking in India," in which a fine boar, mounted upon a showy Arab, is depicted in the act of thrusting his spear into the person of an officer in the uniform of the Bengal Cavalry, who bears a strong likeness to the hero of the other scenes. Ah! they were pleasant days—those days never to dawn again upon the peaceful Rectory, when the absent one's letters arrived full of the wonders of the strange land in which his lot was

cast, to be thus travestied in all love by the spritely and winsome Gerty. Her younger sister used to protest vehemently against such disparagement of her hero, which interference caused Gerty to declare, that the barefaced manner in which that young woman—meaning dear little, timid Maud—was setting her cap at the Captain, was a disgrace to the family. It will be a long time before the merry laughter which used to accompany these sallies, and the repartees thereto, will be heard again; and it was with a wild throb at their hearts that the sisters sprang forward to meet the object of their former merriment. "Had he good news?" Grave Stephen Frankland was at his gravest now, and one glance at his face told the quick-witted girls to banish the hope which, as with their cousin, had flashed across their minds at the first mention of the well-known name.

Cuthbert Lindsay began the common form of introduction; but there was no need for that. The frank girls held out their hands to their dead brother's friend before it was well begun, and no one thought of ceremony at such a meeting.

I should like to pass over all that took place when the bereaved father came down to hear the sad story, and the relics of his brave lad had to be produced and wept over in the darkened room, and go on to the evening, when the smart had somewhat died out of the re-opened wounds, and all concerned felt more resigned to their loss. Frankland would have ridden back to Poundbridge, and remained there till it was time for him to rejoin Brandon, according to arrangement; but this was not to be heard of. A bed was prepared for him at the Rectory, and his rejection at first of the proffered hospitality seemed to give so much disappointment, that he withdrew it and remained.

He had quite mistaken the course best to be adopted in such cases. He imagined that, the bare facts in his possession once told, he ought carefully to avoid all topics which could remind the mourners of their loss; but he found that they loved to dwell upon the memory of the dead, reminding each other of well-known tales of "dear Charley" as child, and boy, and man, and constantly appealing to their guest if their darling had spoken thus, in India, or had forgotten So-and-so, amongst his soldier friends. When Stephen saw, thus, how their inclinations tended, they had no reason to complain of him as uncommunicative. He recalled every act which reflected credit upon his friend, and faithfully recounted it amidst smiles and tears, till the hours wore away, and the girls reluctantly rose to retire for the night. Then, in answer to some question put by Cuthbert Lindsay, Tremlett Towers was mentioned, and at the sound of those words Gertrude Treherne paused, and, with a little puzzled look in her pretty face, asked—

"And what do you know of Tremlett Towers?"

"Simply, that I was born there," was Frankland's smiling reply.

"You don't say so! How came that?"

"Because the estate belongs to my fa—— to my family."

"How very odd. Then Sir George Tremlett——"

"Is my father."

"And Mr. Francis Tremlett?" the inquirer continued, casting a queer look at her sister.

"Is my half-brother."

"Then you will know Mr. Coleman, of Ruxton Court?"

"Excellently well."

"And Grace?" interpolated Maud, quickly.

"No," Frankland replied; "I can't say that I remember any one of that name down there. The names of Mr. Coleman's daughters, if I recollect right, are—Laura, Emily Lavinia, Constance, and Fanny."

"We do not mean any of the Misses Coleman," said Maud, in a disparaging tone; "we mean the dearest, the cleverest, the prettiest and——"

"No, she's not *pretty*," interrupted Gertrude; "she's beautiful."

"Well, then, the most beautiful."

"And the best."

"Oh yes, and——"

"And the queerest girl in the wide world," continued the elder sister, by way of finish.

"Indeed," rejoined the Captain; "and the name of this wonder?"

"Is Grace Lee. She was a parlour-boarder at the school we used to be at. She's much older than we are—that is, she'll be four-and-twenty on the nineteenth of next February," replied Gertrude; "and for the last two years she has lived at Ruxton Court."

"A relation of the Colemans, perhaps?"

"Well, I don't think so," Gertrude replied. "She is without father or mother, poor darling! and I think her relations have not used her as well as they ought. She was here staying with us all last summer, and how we managed to get on without her when she left I really do not know. Everybody loved her. Even papa's dreadful old clerk. But, oh! Captain Frankland, you can have no idea how queer she is."

"May I ask in what her 'queerness' consists?" asked the Captain with one of his grave smiles.

"Well; I can't exactly tell you, if you put it in that way. She likes what no one else cares about, and she pretends not to care about what everybody likes. Now, when you see her, and say that you have been here, I dare say she'll try and make you think that we are quite ordinary acquaintances."

"Thus pretending not to care about what everybody likes?" observed the Captain gallantly.

"No, no—you must not catch me up so: you know I did not mean that. Dear Grace! I wish she were with us now." And the happy recollections associated with the name of her friend, which for the moment had made her forget her sorrow, died away, and repeating their "good night!" the sisters left the room. Prayers had been read, and Mr. Treherne and the servants had retired some time before.

Then the young men adjourned to the deserted kitchen, to smoke, and

Frankland produced some exceedingly muscular cheroots, which Lindsay essayed with a solemnity worthy the occasion. Cuthbert Lindsay and the Captain had been school-fellows at Rugby, and the system there pursued made them honest, manly fellows, whom everybody liked—Stephen after some knowing, and Cuddy before they knew him at all. It was impossible to be in the fellow's company for ten minutes without taking a fancy to him. A bright-eyed, wiry, spruce little fellow, with a warm heart and a clear head—he was in the good books of everybody who had good books for him to be in. There are some people, as you may be aware, who do not provide themselves with stationery of this description. A sparkling, merry little fellow was Cuddy, who spoke the Queen's English plainly upon occasion, and would stick up to friend or foe without casting up the cost of word or blow. For his soul and his body were not in proportion, and being a small man, he was dangerously pugnacious at times. Of course, we do not see him to advantage now as a jolly companion; for although until the news of Charley's death he had seen but little of his uncle and cousins, he was not the man to be in the house with them for a fortnight without feeling deeply for their misfortune. He had been sent there to try and bear them up in their trouble, and he played his part well.

He had not met his old chum for so many years, that it took some time to bring their comparison of notes up to that present speaking; and then, in reply to Stephen's inquiries as to what he was doing and how the world was treating him, he replied that he was a barrister—that is to say, he had chambers in the Temple which were very complete, and went the Southern circuit, which was very jolly, but that as yet his briefs were confined to a peculiar order, which he designated as "soup;" but Stephen, knowing that he had a little patrimony of his own which would keep up the complete chambers in Sycamore Court, and provide for the jollities of the Southern circuit, did not condole with him thereat.

With so much to talk about, it was late hours, and more than three or four of the muscular cheroots had melted away into blue smoke, before they separated for the night.

At breakfast the next morning, Stephen remembered his rencontre with Jim Riley, and the message of that worthy to the Rector, which he delivered, with a view of eliciting something of his history.

"Ah," said Mr. Treherne, "he's a bad one—a very bad one, I am sorry to say."

"There is no truth, then, in his story that he has been unjustly condemned?"

"I am afraid, none; a burglary was committed in a farmhouse near here, and two days afterwards he was found at Seven-Elms in possession of part of the stolen property. It was found hidden in his knife-grinding machine, and the only account that he could give of it was, that some one must have put it there."

"A lame excuse, indeed."

"And a very common one," observed Lindsay. "The generosity of thieves is unbounded. Go to the next county sessions, and you will find that more than sixty per cent. of the prisoners will say that they have been presented with the articles which incriminate them, by some utter stranger (of course the real thief)—no doubt as a token of his admiration and esteem—or else that they have picked them up in some open and frequented thoroughfare. It may be my misfortune," Cuddy continued, "or it may be my fault, but I must confess that I never was presented with a leg of mutton and a brass candlestick by an admiring costermonger in Fleet Street, neither have I ever found somebody else's gold watch secreted in my wig-box. Jim Riley is evidently more lucky."

"There can be no doubt that he was one of the gang," said the Rector; "but as it could not be shown that he was near the place on the night of the burglary, he was convicted only as a guilty receiver of the stolen property. I was in hopes that his long imprisonment would have had a better effect upon his mind. He seems, however, to be incorrigible."

"And I'm sure, papa, you have done all in your power to keep him honest," said Maud.

"I took an interest in him," the Rector observed, "for his mother's sake. She, poor woman, was a very respectable person, and lived for many years in one of those cottages that you might have seen to the right, before you came to the three cross roads."

"And where has she gone now?"

"To her last account! She died last Wednesday; and I was much grieved to find, when it was too late, that she had sent an urgent message asking me to come to her and receive a communication she wished to make. Some unexplained carelessness in her messenger or my servants prevented my being made aware of this until I had heard of her death."

"Do you know, papa," observed Gertrude, as she handed him his tea, "I cannot help thinking that she wanted to speak to you about that Nancy—the poor imbecile you spoke to, Captain Frankland, when you lost your way."

"She certainly has been most unfortunate with her children," Frankland observed.

"Most unfortunate," replied the Rector; "I do not know what is to be done with the girl, unless she goes to the County Asylum. It sounds hard to send her there, but perhaps it would be the best thing, after all."

"Has not Mrs. Riley left any money, then, papa?" asked Maud.

The Rector shook his head. "She was a very careful woman; but it is impossible with her earnings that she could have put away anything considerable; the wonder is how she lived as she did on her little stipend; however, we shall see. The neighbours very properly locked up all her drawers and sent me the keys to take care of, and I shall go over either to-day or to-morrow and see how matters stand."

"Pardon me for suggesting," said Frankland, "that as this fellow Riley is such a scoundrel, he might possibly be tempted to make off with any little provision left for his sister, and that it would be as well, as he is on the spot, for some one to take possession of the place at once."

"Why, he's entitled by law to half of her property," said Lindsay, "if the old woman has not left a will leaving it to some one else."

"Well, that's no reason why he should take it all, Cousin Cuthbert, is it?" asked Gertrude. "I am sure" she added, "that Captain Frankland is quite right, and that some one ought to go over directly and turn that bad fellow out, and give all the money and things they can find to whoever will promise to take care of Nancy for the rest of her life."

"Yes, and get made into an *executor de son tort*," said Cuthbert, glad of an opportunity of displaying the profundity of his legal acquirements to his pretty cousin.

"And who's an *executor de son tort* in the name of wonder?" asked the younger, opening wide her great blue eyes.

"Never you mind, Maud; something very dreadful I can tell you—between a mad bull and the measles—which gets into the house, spoils the dinner, raises the price of hops, upsets the oil bottle on your new dress, and makes you double up your perambulators and bruise your oats. They brought a bill before Parliament to transport it for life and make a present of it to the Emperor of Austria in a gold box; but Lord Derby wants to have a lark with it at Knowsley, and so the Tories are going to move that the bill be read a second time—after goose—on Michaelmas Day."

"When you've quite done talking nonsense, Cuthbert, perhaps you'll hand me the bread?" said the Rector. "Thank you. I certainly agree with Captain Frankland, that immediate steps should be taken to protect this poor girl, and should be much obliged to you, Cuthbert, if you would go over as soon as possible."

"To beard the knife-grinder in his den—the Riley in his hall? Certainly, if you desire it."

"And pray let them make you that thing with the hard name, if it involves transportation," said Gertrude; "for you're getting very troublesome—isn't he, Maud?"

"Oh, Gerty, how can you—when only last night you said——"

But Gerty flew at her sister and gagged her fiercely with a piece of worsted-work. So the sentence was not ended, and the speaker all but smothered for commencing it.

"What time are you to call for your friend at Westborough, Steeve?" asked Cuthbert, when order was restored.

"Oh, about four, so as to be in time to catch the Express, if he has done his business."

"And if he has not, shall you go on without him?"

"That depends! I certainly am in rather a hurry to get home, and—— But I shall see when I get to the inn."

"Very well, then. Now listen to the orders of the day, a breach of which will subject the offender to all the pains and penalties of *præmunire*, which are so awful that nobody knows what they are. I go now instantler, to do battle with the knife-grinder. Captain Frankland is to be permitted to smoke one cheroot in the garden without molestation. Then he is to be taken into custody by Sergeant Gertrude and Constable Maud, and sent to hard labour in the church, the schools, the conservatory, to view the pigsties, and other objects of local interest. When sufficiently punished, he is to be brought in to luncheon, and orders given for his high-mettled racer to be at the door at three o'clock, at which hour he must be liberated, and told to make his way to Riley's cottage. There he will find me installed as man in possession, and I will go on to Westborough with him. If he goes to London—he goes, and there's an end of him; if he stays, I'll bring him back here to Kernden, and we'll make a friend of him; which you will perceive to be poetry. Are the arrangements thus elegantly enunciated agreeable to the persons interested? If so, you are requested to stand in a semicircle, to raise your right hands towards the chandelier, and say 'we are,' in chorus."

The stage direction was not obeyed, but the proposed plans were acquiesced in notwithstanding.

Before he left, Cuthbert drew Frankland on one side, and said, "You can't think, Steeve, what a lot of good you've done the dear old governor. He's quite resigned, and comparatively happy, now that he knows what a good little fellow Charley was, and how well he did his duty. It's been an awful bore for you, of course? but we shan't forget your kindness in a hurry—any of us—I can tell you."

Frankland found the time pass very quickly, and parted with the good Rector and his daughters with mutual regret.

"There goes a fine fellow," said Mr. Treherne, as he rode away. "Ah me! my lad would have been such another—brave, and tender, and true. The home that owns him may well be a happy and a proud one, as mine might have been. Nevertheless, not my will, but THINE be done;" and he bowed his head and went his way without a tear.

Cuthbert Lindsay was waiting at the cross-roads when his friend rode up. "I've secured the Lares and Penates of the deceased Riley," he said, "including the cat; and, by Jove! we've all been too hard upon the illustrious Jim. He was in the cottage all night, but has not touched anything that was not his own. I found all the drawers and places, and cupboards, locked up, just as the neighbours had left them."

"Then he is not so thorough a rascal, after all?"

"No; and the most extraordinary part of it is, that although he has left the movables, he has removed the incumbrances."

"What *do* you mean?"

"Simply this—that he has taken his mad sister away with him, no one knows where. He knocked at the door where she slept, called her out

—they tell me she is always the first up—and they have gone as the dew-drop is blown from the bough.”

“Perhaps they have only left for the day?”

“Perhaps; but it is not usual for people who go out only for the day to pack up and take away every rag that belongs to them, bundled up in a blue and a yellow striped handkerchief.”

“You have traced them, then?”

“As far as the turnpike—no further. In reply to the keeper’s questions, Jim said that he was taking the girl to Sheffield—where they lived before they came here—to her grandmother. I believe there is such a place as Sheffield, but the descriptions given me of Jim Riley fill me with the strongest doubts that he ever *could* have had a grandmother.”

“Then you ought to give information to the police, and have them followed and brought back.”

“What for? To be obliged to let them go again? Not I. This fellow is the girl’s nearest relation, and he has a legal right to her custody, of which we cannot deprive him, unless we can prove that he treats her badly; but the evidence of the neighbours is all the other way. No, Steeve, they have gone from your gaze like a beautiful dream, and you can mourn them in vain over valley and stream; only, if you want to catch the Express, look sharp, and get on to Westborough before four o’clock.”

So on they went briskly, and soon arrived at the inn. The landlord was at the door leaning against the lenti, and gazing at nothing in particular with a contemplative frown, after the manner of landlords. Of him Frankland instantly inquired if any person had called to see Mr. Brandron; and learned no one—leastwise, to the landlord’s knowledge—had been near the place since he (the inquirer) left, “excepting, in course, Mr. Jawlings and the other gentlemen who used the bar-parlour regular of a night. Mr. Brandron had got up early, and had been a writing all the day; they would find him in his room.” There Frankland sought him, bidding Cuddy to wait a moment or two till he could tell him what their movements would be, and knocked at the door.

There was no reply.

He knocked louder; still no answer came, and Stephen essayed to open the door. It was locked. A cold tremour, which he could not suppress, ran through him from head to foot, as the forebodings of evil, expressed by his old friend, flashed through his mind. “Good God!” he exclaimed, “can anything have happened to him?” and with one mighty rush he brought his now sturdy shoulders against the panels, and crash went the door into the middle of the apartment.

No one was there!

Lindsay and the landlord, alarmed at the noise, came rushing in, and Stephen had to account as well as he could for his apparently unreasonable violence. “But where was Mr. Brandron?” The landlord could only say

that about ten o'clock, as he passed the window to cut some vegetable marrows for the market, he'd "seed him with his eyes"—with what other organs he could have made the observation he did not mention—"I seed him," he said, "with my eyes a sittin' at that there table, a writin' and a foldin', and a messin' about with them there bits of paper"—indicating some old letters that the wind had scattered about the floor. Stephen called for wax and a taper, and instantly sealed them up in a packet, so that their contents could not be pried into. But what had become of their owner? His habits were precise and methodical; and he was clearly not the sort of man to leave his desk open and his papers lying about in a room with an open window, even though he had locked the door and put the key in his pocket. The landlord was utterly unable to account for Frankland's anxiety, and Lindsay could not exactly make out what he feared. Brandron, he said, would be sure to come back directly, as it would soon be time to start for the station. They had better sit down and wait patiently. Frankland did so—for seven minutes; then he rose and strode out of the house to make inquiries in the village.

The village was dozing in the bright sunshine, with not even one eye open. It was so at the best of times, when it was on the main road to the fashionable watering-place which lay two or three miles further on, and was perched upon the top of a long, long chalky hill, toiling up the which made horse and man thirsty, and not disinclined to stop and take a long breath and something short when they reached its shade. It was not a lively place. I do not mean to say that any one has levelled the hill—or taken up the church, and the inn, and the two beerhouses, and the butcher's shop, and the baker's (where the post-office was), and the row of thatched cottages with the old-fashioned diamond panes in the windows, behind which four pennyworth of sugar-sticks were exhibited for sale in three pickle-bottles, with a ball of string and a farthing battledoor—and the lawyer's house (what *could* they want with a lawyer?), and the seven gentlemen's villas, and the green, the oak tree, the stocks, and the pump—and carried them away bodily from off that main road, and the top of that winding hill, and deposited them somewhere else. There they were! But a railroad had come and skirted the hill, and bored a tunnel through its weakest point, and got on the other side of it, and dashed into the favourite watering-place round a sharp corner, in a manner that seemed to say—"Hollo! you're there, are you?"—and thus seemed to have scared the little village that it circumvented into a state of despondency which could not be thrown off. It was still on the high road and the top of the hill? but what is the use of being on a high road that is superseded, and on the top of a high hill which nobody wants to climb? So the little village dozed in the sunshine when it shone,—got sulky when the leaves fell and the murky autumn came, and sank into a state of torpor when the winter set in. It had taken no notice of the arrival of the Captain and his friend, and did not

trouble itself about the departure of either. It had no tidings to give of Mr. Brandon.

At last Frankland came to the little Green just as some boys were liberated from the village school, and from one of the most intelligent of these he got a clue. He learned that a tall gentleman in black had gone by in the forenoon with another gentleman, whilst they were playing under the shade of the big oak.

"Did they know who the other gentleman was?" "No, they did not. He was a stranger thereabouts, for he had given young Jack Todd sixpence to show him the way to the Rising Sun."

"Did he go in there?" "No, the gentleman who was there saw him through the window as he was coming, and went out to meet him, and then they walked away quickly together down there."

"Down there" was the road to the church.

"What sort of a gentleman was the other gentleman?"

"Oh! he was a very kind gentleman—had talked to them about their game; asked why little William Thompson had had his leg cut off, and gave *him* sixpence too. He was quite a nice gentleman."

Stephen Frankland went back to the Rising Sun much relieved by this information. It was no use trying to catch the Express now; besides, he could not leave until he had seen Brandon, and learned from his own lips that his presentiments were unfounded. He determined, therefore, not to go back to Kernden, and told Cuddy the reason why.

"Well, old man," he said, "you know best. The governor and the girls will be disappointed, that's all; and I don't think you'll be quite as comfortable here as at the Rectory. But if you will take to dry-nursing elderly Indians with wandering propensities, you must accept all the inconveniences of the situation. Give my love to the baby when he comes in, and get him to give you a character as being steady, honest, and obliging. Good bye."

Again Stephen Frankland sat down and tried to "wait patiently." He lit a cheroot, called for something to drink, and drank it. He lit another cheroot when the first was done, called for something to read, and read it. It was a Maidstone journal, a week old; but that did not matter to one only a day returned to England after eight years' absence. To say he read it—for his eyes followed the printed words column after column, --but if you had snatched the paper from his hand and asked him what he was reading about, he could not have told you. He was in the fidgets: and a man who has the fidgets cannot give up his mind to anything—not even to fidgeting. He took just trouble to argue himself into the belief that there was no cause for fidgetiness. Brandon he thought had taken it for granted that he was stopping at the Rectory. Had not he (Brandon) prophesied that they would be so glad of his visit—have so much to ask him; and had not his words proved true? He had met the person he expected, and they had walked on together—most probably to the fashion-

able watering-place—where they would dine, transact their business, and Brandron would be back at—well, if he came in a fly, about half-past eight, or nine. It was quite ridiculous for him to anticipate any personal injury from so kind a person as the stranger had been represented to be; and as for money matters, or anything of that kind, the old Indian was shrewd enough to take care of himself. Having thus shown that he had no cause for fidgeting, he was driven by the fidgets out of the house, and vainly attempted to walk them off.

It was now half-past five o'clock. The sun had lost its fiery strength, and the afternoon was a very pleasant one—just the sort of afternoon upon which a walk through a picturesque part of the country would be a very agreeable relaxation to anybody who had not the fidgets. As it was, Stephen did not find it to his taste, and had not proceeded more than a mile, when he turned back. Perhaps, after all, Brandron would not stay away to dinner, and had returned! The thought made him quicken his pace; and coming to a path by which he thought he could cut off a long bend in the road, he diverged into the fields; and having taken the wrong turning and wandered about vaguely, after the manner of people who try to make short cuts on an unknown country, came at last suddenly upon Riley's cottage. "*Now*," he said to himself, "it's all right, I know my way," and he sprang over the stile, and began to walk briskly up the lane, homewards. This lane curled about a good deal, and at one of the twists he caught sight of some one walking in front of him. He quickened his steps, and perceived that it was a man—a well dressed man; but, he found, too short for Brandron—perhaps the person who had been with him?

Now, when you are walking in an unfrequented country lane, and each turning that you come to brings you in sight of an individual who is proceeding in the same direction as yourself, till the next shuts him from your view, to be again discovered plodding onward when you turn again, it is excusable for you to be seized with a curiosity to see what that individual is like; at least I hope so: for I have often, under such circumstances, put on a spurt to get a front view of one so journeying. It is so provoking to watch a person's back going on before you mile after mile! Stephen had a better motive than mere inquisitiveness, so he hurried on; and when the sound of his approaching footsteps came within ear-shot of the man in front, he, too, quickened his pace. He evidently did not wish to be overtaken, though he never looked back to see who followed, and the walk bade fair to end in a race if he had not stumbled and fallen over some loose stones that in his hurry he did not observe on the path. His pursuer was then close at hand. The man rose and turned upon him angrily, as he came up,—and *Stephen and his father stood face to face!*

A BOAT SONG FOR THE NAVAL RESERVE.

BY THOMAS HOOD.

LIFT her along—
Stout hearts and strong!
Let our oars fall in time
To the rhyme
Of our song!

Old England's mighty seamen,
The masters of the deep,
Have left to us—their sons, my lads—
Their ancient sway to keep;
To make our bright flag honoured
Alike by friend and foe,
As far as Ocean's waters roll—
As far as breezes blow!

Then three cheers for our Queen:
And three cheers for our Land:
And three cheers for the hearts that love us!
And three times three
For the British Flag,
That floats on the breeze above us!

Give her good way—
Light hearts and gay!
And our oars in their beat
Shall repeat
The old lay!

Old England's mighty vessels
But wait the voice of war
To spread their grand wings on the gale,
And wake their thunder's roar;
And England's foes again should find,
Amid the battle's smoke,
The same staunch English wooden walls—
The same stout hearts of oak.

Then three cheers for our Queen:
And three cheers for our Land:
And three cheers for the hearts that love us!
And three times three
For the British Flag,
That floats on the breeze above us!

A BOAT SONG.

Steadily swing—
 Hearts for a King!
 And our oars in their chime
 Shall keep time
 As we sing!

Old England's mighty Charter,
 It still remains the same:
 Oppression still her standard hates—
 Still Freedom loves her name!
 And calmly still her people
 In God repose their trust,
 Nor change the Peace they love for War—
 Save when that War is just!

Then three cheers for our Queen:
 And three cheers for our Land:
 And three cheers for the hearts that love us!
 And three times three
 For the British Flag,
 That floats on the breeze above us!

Lift her along—
 Stout hearts and strong!
 While our oars in their beat
 Still repeat
 The old song!

Three cheers for our Queen:
 Three cheers for our Land:
 Three cheers for the hearts that love us!
 And three times three
 For the dear old Flag,
 That floats on the breeze above us!

FOR THE YOUNG OF THE HOUSEHOLD.

PEARLS

STRUNG TOGETHER FOR COZY NOOK.

THE "Merry Christmas" of 1861 is now with the other "Merry Christmases" you have passed—you will *never* see it or *them* again; but I hope you will as freshly and happily enjoy those that are to come.

And here is the First of January, Eighteen-hundred and Sixty-two!

It is very pleasant to look round on your dear, happy faces, and impossible not to wish that Eighteen-hundred and Sixty-three may find you as *light-hearted*—No, little Miss, I did *not* say as "*light-headed*"—I could not mean that for a moment. I am not particularly fond of old heads on young shoulders—I greatly prefer the heads and shoulders being of the same age; and I was going to wish you something very pleasant indeed, until that saucy little girl, all curls and crinoline (which, by the way, is *not* "crinoline," but iron hoops) interrupted me, and now I have forgotten the conclusion of my "wish." I hope you believe I intended it to be something most kind and affectionate; for I do love children with all my heart. I want to tell you how charmed I have been with a great many of the books those very busy people, the publishers, have sent forth for your edification and amusement at this season.

Mrs. Somerville Broderip's "TINY TADPOLE" cannot fail to delight you. What a "Tadpole" that was! I fear that in every "*cozy nook*" there is a "Tiny Tadpole!" I do not mean, of course, an actual juvenile frog, anxious to get rid of a tail, and grow his own legs and arms, but a creature using every effort in its little power to do as it likes, and let advice go in at one ear and out at the other as quickly as possible. Griffith and Farren have also published such a first-rate book for boys, called "TRUE BLUE!" I hope there is not a boy in the United Kingdom at this moment, old enough to wear "knickerbockers," who does not know what "True blue" means; and many remember reading "Blue Jackets," "Salt Water," yes, and "Peter the Whaler," by Mr. Kingston, who has just published "True Blue." Perhaps you have heard a good deal of New Zealand lately. If you feel interested about the inhabitants of that beautiful, healthy country, Mrs. Aylmer's "DISTANT HOMES" will amuse you. If you are fond of riddles, "THE HARPSDEN RIDDLE BOOK" gives a great many new ones.

A very dear young lady-friend of mine has been reading a book called "MEADOW LEA; OR, THE GIPSY CHILDREN." Her brother says it is "rather slow;" but he is remarkably fond of a "make ready—present—fire!" sort of book, where there is a great deal of action and very little thought. The same young lady admires a story by Fairleigh Owen, called "THE RITTER BELL," and as I have great faith both in her feeling and judgment, I recommend it a place in "Cozy Nook."

Her brother tells me that "GUY RIVERS'S STRUGGLES IN THE GREAT WORLD" is a "capital book," and he should like to do all that Guy Rivers did, and suffer all that Guy Rivers suffered.

I could fill the Magazine from the first page to the last with accounts of pretty books and their pretty pictures; but your friends and relatives judge what you best like, better than I can.

At Christmas time I must surely give you a Christmas Story; and here

is one! You will not like it the less because it is about my old friends, "the Fairies." I dearly love a fairy tale, and so, dear little readers—so do you. It is written for you by a very learned gentleman, who wears a "big wig," and may be seen daily in one of the Courts of Law, yet who thinks himself well and rightly employed when he puts aside heavy and serious "cases" to teach little boys and girls—the Future of the World!

THE FAIRY PICTURES ON CHRISTMAS EVE.

"GOODNIGHT! Miss Nellie." But Nellie made no answer, and soon the nurse's footstep died away in the passage, and all was quiet. It was Christmas Eve, and cold, bitter cold. The wind whistled between the twigs of the leafless trees, and seemed to chuckle to itself as they crackled under its frosty breath, and the poor moon looked so blue and cold, you could almost fancy it was frost-bitten too. But it wasn't cold in Nellie's room; there was a bright fire in the grate, and the flame flickered up and down, and crackled, and talked to itself, and everything looked bright and cheerful—all, but Nellie herself. The curtains were drawn close round the little bed, except on the side near the fire, so that when it blazed up for a second or two, you could catch a glimpse of Nellie's face—and a very unhappy little face it was. Nellie was a very pretty child: she had long sunny ringlets and large blue eyes, and, generally, looked very merry and good-humoured; but now she didn't look pretty or good-humoured at all. Half her face was buried in the soft pillow, but the other half looked very ill-tempered and discontented; and the blue eyes, half shut, looked very red, and exhibited decided symptoms of having lately had a good cry. Now, the fact is, Nellie had not been herself all that day—everything vexed her. She didn't like the cold, and she had got tired of her holiday and wanted something to do; and so she continued fretting and complaining, till at last her mamma sent her to bed in disgrace. Nellie's dignity was offended, which added to her ill-temper, so she wouldn't give any answer to the nurse's "good night," but lay and cried, and thought what an unhappy little party she was. And at last she was beginning to forget her misfortunes, and was watching the fire, which was getting hollower and hollower, till the coals fell in with a crash, and the light grew very soft and dim, and Nellie shut her eyes and dozed for a short time—how long she didn't know; but a strange noise startled her, and she opened them again wider than ever. Nellie first fancied it was the Waits in the street; but it seemed to come nearer and nearer, and Nellie could distinguish the sound of fifes and drums, but very low and sweet, as at a great distance. While Nellie was wondering where it could be, she chanced to glance at the fire again, and there she saw on the hob a sight which made her forget all about the music: it was a little man, smaller than Nellie had ever seen before, for he was scarce seven inches high; and while she was looking at him he caught hold of the bars of the grate, which didn't seem at all too hot for his hands, and swung himself down to the hearth. When he had got down he pulled out a tiny handkerchief and gently dusted his fingers, which had been soiled by the black grate; and then, nimbly climbing up by the fringe of the curtain, stepped upon the bed; and perching himself upon Nellie's feet, so as to gain a more elevated position, he gravely bowed to her—or rather, to her head, for she had gathered the drapery around her so that little more than her eyes could be seen. Nellie didn't quite know whether to be frightened or not at her strange visitor; but he

looked so very good-natured that she decided that he couldn't be anything so very alarming after all. So she began to examine him more attentively: and he didn't seem at all bashful, but stood up on tiptoe, and seemed quite as much amused to look at her as she was in admiring him. He was dressed in a bright green tunic, of a fashion Nellie had never seen before, with a belt made out of twisted grass; and his legs, which were very long for his size, and which seemed to be quite elastic, without any particular joints, were cased in long red hosen, reaching to the waist; his hat was made out of a leaf of prickly holly, bright and green, with a little red feather in it; and he carried in his hand what at first sight appeared to be a cane with a large gold head, but Nellie saw on closer examination that it was a bright yellow crocus, which he used as a walking-stick. He looked at Nellie as if expecting her to speak—but she didn't; so he said—

“Little mortal! the Elf-queen is about to visit thee—prepare!”

Nellie didn't exactly see what she had to prepare; so she lay still, and looked at the strange little man, and listened to the music, which seemed to come nearer and nearer. At last she heard the old church clock strike, with its rich deep tones; and almost before the first stroke had sounded, Nellie saw that her room was crowded with a number of little people, some of them like the little man on the bed; but others were tiny ladies, dressed in all varieties of colours, and with dewdrops in their hair, which sparkled in the dim fire-light like so many diamonds. But what chiefly fascinated her attention was a tiny chariot, which had just alighted on the bed—but where it came from Nellie could not imagine. The chariot itself was made of sparkling mother-of-pearl, and drawn by two wee humming-birds of the gayest plumage; while two bright fire-flies, one on each side of the chariot, performed the part of carriage-lamps, and lighted up the interior with a strange soft light. Nellie saw all this at the first glance; but her whole admiration was taken up by the occupant of the chariot. It was a lady, of the same delicate proportions as her tiny equipage, and of a strange, graceful beauty,—indeed, so beautiful, that Nellie thought she had never seen any thing so lovely before. She was dressed in a short silk tunic, like her fairy attendants, but of so light and delicate a texture, you could almost fancy it a silver cobweb, and sparkling with a brilliancy no mortal woof could emulate; and in her hair, which was wavy and golden, like sunshine sparkling on the dimples of the sea, a thousand flashing brilliants were entwined, which glanced in the light of her fire-fly torches in a way no earthly simile can describe. Nellie quickly made up her mind that this must be the Queen, whose coming the queer little messenger had told her to expect; and her prevailing impression was that she should like to kiss her. All this time the music continued; and Nellie saw that some of the Fairies had strange instruments in their hands, which produced the sweet sounds she had heard. But just as the last stroke of twelve sounded, and the old Christmas chimes began, the music was suddenly hushed, and Nellie's queer little visitants struck up a wild chorus, “with the whole strength of the company,” but still very soft and sweet; and Nellie caught every word as clearly as though spoken close by her ear:—

“Child of earth, that solemn peeling

Tells the year's most holy hour;

Tells the hour of God's revealing

All His boundless love and power.

Eighteen hundred years are numbered,
 Eighteen hundred years have fled,
 Since the Eastern shepherds slumbered
 Sweetly on their grassy bed.
 Angels from high heaven winging
 Woke them from their slumbers then,—
 Angels, God's glad tidings singing,
 'Peace on earth, Goodwill to men.'
 Hark! those tones of holy gladness
 Bring in that glad chime again,
 'Sons of earth, forget your sadness,
 Peace on earth, Goodwill to men.'
 Now too, we, in countless numbers,
 Come from out our fairy homes,
 Come and watch o'er children's slumbers,
 Summoned by those solemn tones.
 We, the tiny winged heralds,
 Sent to guard His children dear!
 Children, whom He loved so dearly,
 When He lived and suffered here."

The strange strain died away, and for a moment all was hushed, and then the Fairy Queen spoke—"Child," she said, "the hour is fast passing away, and we shall be invisible to mortal eyes for another year. But first we must show you some of our Fairy Pictures." Even while she spoke, the curtain which closed the foot of Nellie's bed appeared to become transparent, and white clouds seemed to pass over it, which gradually darkened, and assumed shape and colour, and Nellie saw that she was looking into the street. It was a street she did not know. The lamps shone brightly on the snow, which covered the ground, and more was coming down and drifting along in great flakes, like a flock of flying swans. The long street was almost desolate; but beneath one of the lamp-posts Nellie could perceive the figure of a boy, leaning against it. Nellie wondered why he was standing still in the cold street; but as he turned slightly round, the light of the lamp fell on his face, and she saw that he was crying bitterly. However, after a few moments he brushed his eyes with his ragged sleeve and proceeded slowly on. Nellie looked up with an inquiring glance to her Fairy visitor, and then the Queen spoke, with a quiet, half-sorrowful tone—"Nellie, that boy has a mother dying, and a little sister starving, at home; and he is going to them now, and has not been able to get even a morsel of bread to take to them. That is why he is crying, and this is the dawn of *his* Christmas Day." A tear stole down Nellie's cheek, and she glanced back again to the magic picture,—but the scene was changed. Nellie could distinguish the interior of a room, but very, very different from her own. It was a bedroom, too; but the paper was torn off in various places, and there was a hole in the one little window, through which the cold wind whistled—and oh! so chill and drear it looked! There had been a fire in the rusty grate, but now it was quite gone out, and the handful of ashes that remained looked even more desolate than if it had been entirely empty. There was a rushlight, half burnt down, on the one old rickety chair; for the poor room could boast no table, and the bedstead was the only other piece of furniture. And on the bed, scarce covered by the coarse patched quilt, lay the form of a woman: her features were still noble and regular, but so worn and wasted,

you could hardly fancy what she might have been. One thin white hand hung listless at the side of the bed, while the other arm seemed to clasp something, which at first sight Nellie could not distinguish; but as her eyes became accustomed to the dim light, she saw that it was a little girl, perhaps five or six years old, calmly sleeping by her mother's side. The eyes of the woman were closed, and Nellie wondered at her perfect immovability. The dim uncertain light flickered over her pale features, but all else was still as death, and Nellie felt a strange cold feeling of awe come over her as she gazed at that still slight form sleeping so calmly in that wretched place. At last the door opened, and a boy came in, the same that Nellie had seen before in the wide, cold street. The noise of his entrance, little as it was, awoke the little girl, who, gently disengaging herself from her mother's arm, came up to him, and seemed to ask him for something; but he turned away with a sorrowful air, and the look of hope on her features faded, and she went sadly to the dim rushlight, and tried to warm her numbed hands at the flame. Both seemed to move quietly, as if for fear of waking their mother; and after a few seconds the boy slipped softly to the bedside, and kissed the pale hand that rested on the quilt—but Nellie saw him start back with a look of terror, and throw his arms round his sister with passionate sobs. And Nellie knew that the poor mother was dead, and that the two poor children were alone in the wide, wide world; and she pressed her face into her soft pillow, and sobbed as if her heart would break. The Fairy Queen looked on with a kind, half-sorrowful smile, and, after a few seconds, simply said "Nellie!" And Nellie looked up again, but the magic picture again was changed.

And now it was a scene that Nellie knew full well; for it was her own mamma's pretty sitting-room—everything breathed an air of comfort and luxury, everything was there and in its place. Nellie's pet canary hung up in the centre of the deep bow-window, and her favourite spaniel was on his own peculiar cushion by the warm fireside; and there was mamma with her work-basket in the place where she always sat; and, oh! wonder of wonders! there was Nellie herself, curled up in the corner of one of the warm sofas, and doing nothing, but looking cross and disagreeable as she had done all the day before. And now Nellie glanced to the Fairy again, and saw that a frown was on her face; and Nellie hid hers between her hands, and cried again for shame and sorrow. And then Nellie heard the clock chime again, and then the deep boom of the great bell as it sounded "One,"—and the sweet voice of the Fairy said—"Now, Nellie, farewell! and whenever you feel inclined to yield to evil thoughts, look around on the pleasures you have, which others want, and think of the Fairy Pictures and Christmas Eve."

And then the soft, sweet music was heard again; and Nellie looked up, but all was dark. The last sparks of the fire were dying away in the grate, and Nellie knew that the music she heard was from the Waits in the street playing their notes of welcome to usher in the Christmas morn.

Nellie has lived now many, many years, and is the silver-haired grandmamma of a lot of mischievous little lasses with laughing eyes; and often in the winter evening they crowd around her for a story: but of her whole store—and a large one it is—there is none more often asked for than grandmamma's simple tale, of the "Fairy Pictures on Christmas Eve."

A. J. L.

THE GRIEF OF A WHOLE PEOPLE.

JUST as our labours for the month were concluded, and while we were hoping to gladden the hearts of many at the Festival which so especially enjoins happiness and justifies pleasure, came the terrible intelligence that carries mourning into every household over which the Sovereign holds sway—the death of one whose loss will be more thoroughly “National” than could have been that of any other subject of the Crown. The grief is universal, for the consequences are beyond calculation : it is indeed a “frowning Providence” that has thus afflicted a whole people, converting the joy of a joyful season into one sob of sorrow, and giving to a public calamity all the misery that could have been engendered by a private and personal bereavement. The voice of mourning will be heard wherever its sound can reach ; and no pen can be laid aside for rest without some contribution to the general wail that will ascend from many millions, to whom the large and practical virtues of the Prince were known in a thousand ways by the good that was seen to arise out of them—influencing and benefiting all classes, bearing fruit in every house, from the Palace to the Cottage. There are millions whose prayers for the Queen will be offered up in faith, and hope. This heaviest of all trials has come when other trials were heavy—at a time of perplexity, when the Councillor, Companion, and Friend seems to be most needed.

Time will tell us much of what England has gained by the example and teaching of the Prince : we shall soon learn to know how much we have lost. In the Pulpit, in the Senate, and throughout the Press, we shall hear of the good he has wrought. There will be no hearth in the Kingdom and its dependencies, and among its allies over all the world, that will not bear testimony to his virtues : hence—and hence only—we must draw consolation ; and although the Future is troubled and dark, we know there is a POWER that cannot err ; and that our first duty is to bow in submission to the inscrutable Will of Providence.

Never yet has a sadder emphasis been given to the Poet's lines—

“The glories of our birth and state
Are shadows, not substantial things.”



A DAY OF ARCTIC ADVENTURE.

BY DAVID WALKER, M.D., F.L.S., M.R.I.A., F.R.G.S., &c.

(Late Surgeon and Naturalist on board the "Fox," in the Search for Sir John Franklin.)



THE morning of the 26th May, 1858, was bright and lovely; the sun was reflected from floe, iceberg, and snow-capped mountains, as we entered Disco Bay. The surface of the water was as smooth as a pond—not a breath of wind—our sails hung loosely in their brails, and we found it necessary to get up steam. Slowly we passed along the coast, threading our way among hundreds of icebergs, whose varied proportions and fantastic shapes added to the beauty of the coast scenery: many of these ice-mountains were

aground; others were borne quietly by the current to be drifted through Davis' Strait to the southward. One, very majestic in its appearance, slowly passed our ship; it was 380 feet high, square-topped, solid, and

massive, its huge sides caverned and eroded by the ceaselessly active element in which it glided, and which, like the Promethean vulture, constantly gnawed at its vitals. We steamed close to another, which, as we approached, seemed to shake with some internal convulsion; the immense mass rocked and groaned, then reared itself up, breaking into vast fragments as it toppled over: very fortunately the noise it made warned us to give it a wider berth, else we might have received damage from some of the numerous pieces. This disruption was caused by the mass having become, as the sailors say, "top-heavy," the water having eaten away and dissolved the base; and the upper portion gravitating downwards, the mere wave of the ship was sufficient to excite the latent elements of destruction; the report of this disruption was louder than that of a small park of artillery simultaneously discharged.

The coast along which we passed was picturesque in the extreme. The main body of Disco Island is composed of terraced trap of tertiary volcanic origin, its average height being about 3,000 feet; the summit is covered with the jökler, or the temporary fast ice-mass of the country, which breaks off at intervals of about twelve years. The sun was shining upon the sides of the mountains facing the sea, which, with their dark brown masses and indentations of the deepest black, and the summit covered with a cap of glistening snow, might not inaptly be compared to an immense bride-cake. The upper 1,500 feet or so of these mountains seemed almost perpendicular, their surface broken only by the ravines, which were occasionally seen, or by the conical stream of *detritus* which filled the small hollows. Here and there a thin white zigzag line showed where the sun's rays had thawed a miniature cascade, which leaped and bounded down the immense wall, furrowing the rock and aiding the elements in their disintegrating action. The lowest portion of the coast—that nearest the sea—was composed of sandstone, red and yellow, with an occasional spit of sand running along way into the bay, the accumulation of grounded ice and stranded icebergs.

All morning we steered our course among the bergs, small pieces of floating ice often coming foul of the ship. As we rounded Flakker Point, the surface of the sea was covered with myriads of eider-ducks, which, as we neared them, rose in thick clouds to settle down a little further on, again to be disturbed as we approached. Entering the Waigatt, we crept along the shore, our purpose being to anchor off that part of the coast where coal-beds crop out to the surface, about midway up the strait. The dark lines of coal contrasted well with the thicker bands of sandstone, so that it was not difficult to identify the spot; and all our spare boats and men were at once sent off with pickaxes and shovels to bring on board this, to us, precious material.

The Waigatt Strait is about eight miles wide, and separates Disco Island from the Continent of Greenland—the island appearing as if it had been broken off and towed a few miles away from the mainland. The

mountains on each side rise to a height of 3,000 to 4,000 feet, and are either composed of basalt or granitic rocks. This strait is one of the "*Anootok*" of the Eskimos, and is truly, as its name signifies, "a wind-loved spot," for the high land on each side of the narrow strait converts it into a funnel, through which the wind sweeps with dangerous velocity.

We had visited the place the previous year, when I had been foiled in attempting to reach the summit of one of these mountains: this time, however, I was determined to succeed, and proceeded at once to equip myself for my journey. The temperature of the air was just hovering about freezing-point as, at eight in the evening, I started from the ship. Thick strongly-nailed boots on my feet, an alpenstock in my hand, a geological case, and a barometer slung across my shoulders—these were my accoutrements. The men were hard at work picking out the coal as I landed on the ice-foot, or narrow belt of ice, which, adhering to the land for a longer time than the other ice which covers the strait in the winter, formed a natural landing-stage, rising and falling with the tide. Close to the shore were the seams of coal, which could easily be worked for a short distance in, as the layers were almost horizontal. To scale these beds was my first object, and at 150 feet I reached a gradually-ascending plateau, covered with the *débris* of the mountain just above me; here and there a huge piece of rock showing the origin of the smaller ones, among which I obtained many good specimens of chalcedony and cornelian, with numerous pieces of chabazite and other zeolites which filled the amygdaloid cavities in the trap. Scattered among these rocks were a few—but very few—patches of grass, where an occasional saxifrage or poppy was struggling into existence. Scrambling over these rock-pieces I reached one immense fragment, some 1,000 tons in weight, which, like an avalanche, had been torn from the parent mountain mass. In one of the hollows of this plateau—of which there were many covered with snow, that had not yet disappeared—I saw some ptarmigan feeding, which, in their snow-white winter dress, could, with difficulty, be distinguished from the surface over which they ran. Two or three hares were quietly nibbling at the grass, eyed from a distance by a hungry fox, who was evidently making up his mind to have one of them for his supper. The ascent over these rubbly stones was by no means easy, and many times I halted before reaching a spur, about 1,600 feet high, where I rested for awhile, and where the first of a series of panoramic views burst upon me. Beneath me was the strait, with its navy of icebergs slowly surging along—some, the leviathans of the deep, moving in calm stateliness, while others, like tiny gun-boats, seemed despatched on some special service as they passed rapidly to and fro. The ship lay idly swinging to the tide, and the hum of the men at work below could plainly be heard. Around me lay the *disjecta membra* of many a conflict, in which time and the elements had been engaged with one of our emblems of eternity—the everlasting hills. On the opposite side of the strait was varied mountain and valley

scenery which would have ravished an artist, and above me rose heavenward 2,500 feet of perpendicular rock capped with snow.

Crossing this arm, I lost sight of the ship; and now commenced the real peril of the ascent, which began, somewhat anomalously, by a descent into a ravine about 300 feet deep and very narrow, the sides clothed with broken rock and small stones, into and among which the foot slipped. Quick but dangerous was the descent, which I happily accomplished without accident; but to get up the other side presented an unforeseen difficulty, and my progress resembled that of the unfortunate who slipped three feet back for every one taken forward, and I was unable to walk backward. However, by taking a zigzag course, I succeeded, after an hour's hard work, in reaching the top of the ridge. Following this upward I found myself stopped at a height of 2,000 feet, by the perpendicular face of the mountain, which was formed here of columns six to eight feet high, while others, lying horizontally, were much longer—reminding me of the somewhat similar formation seen at the Giant's Causeway. Without attempting to climb this precipitous face I turned westward and encountered a steep slope of snow, which apparently led up to within a few hundred feet of the jökler-bedecked summit. Congratulating myself upon this easy pathway, cheerfully and carelessly I stepped on the bank, and suddenly found myself rolling some fifty or sixty feet down its deceitful face. Exposed to all the wind and frost of the winter, this snow had been caked hard and smooth; and, instead of having improved my prospect, I seemed in a worse plight than before. Fortunately my geological hammer had a broad cutting edge at one end, which in an extremity could be used as a hatchet; so cutting, or rather gouging out steps, I succeeded, by the aid of the alpenstock, in reaching the upper end of this treacherous slope: the last fifty feet were the worst, as the ice was almost as hard as rock and the incline very steep; by dint of perseverance, however, I managed to reach the face of the cliff, having ascended in all 3,300 feet. One glance upward seemed quite enough—the ascent appeared utterly impracticable, but I was determined not to be daunted by any obstacle; for were not my feet resting on rock which I well knew no Eskimo or Dane had ever reached, and was I not a Briton? So, bracing myself well up and gathering all my courage together, like the pilgrim, "I addressed myself to the ascent." Climbing through a narrow gorge, I succeeded in progressing about fifty feet, very much as a sweep climbs a chimney. Here I would fain have got rid of my barometer and geological case, which were sadly in my way; but, without the first, I had no means of ascertaining the height of the mountain should I reach its summit, and I was very reluctant to abandon my specimens. On emerging from this chasm, the rock I had next to climb was very steep, and worn smooth and polished by the action of a small summer stream that trickled on it, presenting no holding-place at all. The lower part seemed a trifle rougher than the rest, and over this I essayed to ascend, the way becoming steeper and smoother as I crawled

along, till at last I was obliged to rest by the whole surface of my body. Slowly I wriggled myself upwards by the palms of my hands and my breast, pushing my alpenstock before me; once it rolled back, striking me on the face and hands, almost causing me to loose my hold, which would have been sudden destruction. Now and then I grasped madly at small pieces of jutting rock, which at another time I should never have dreamed could give any support; but the convulsive clinging made up, I suppose, for the deficiency of the holding-places. At last it seemed that I could get no further, and I hung suspended from the rock. Oh! how slowly the time seemed to drag, and yet a whole existence was crowded into those moments of suspense, each of which I fully expected would have been my last. But the love of life was strong; and, after a few more electric despairing efforts, I found myself clinging to a steep ledge which bounded this water-channel—but to this day I could not describe how I got there. I turned over, and saw the alpenstock on the face of the rock—and there it remained. The remaining part of my way was still dangerous, loose pieces of rock often breaking under my feet and thundering down the mountain side in a painfully suggestive manner, and I had to test every stone and ledge before trusting it with the weight of hand or foot. At last I reached the jökler which crowned the summit; this I could not ascend, as no hammer could gouge out steps in its adamantine hardness: so on a shelf of rock at its base I rested, and thanked God for life. . . .

I remained about an hour and a half on the summit to wait till the fluctuations of the barometer had ceased, when I found that the mercury had fallen some five inches; the mountain, therefore, was 3,950 feet high. It was now a quarter to one in the morning as I looked across the strait to the northward, yet high above the mountains shone the sun. Midnight of the clock was no midnight to him! The mountain-tops from the other side of the strait reflected his rays from their snowy summits, while below me the bergs seemed balancing themselves in the glassy water. Within sight, and almost seeming to touch me, was a miniature glacier, some five or six miles long and two or three hundred yards wide, which, like an overflowing molten mass, had oozed out of the valley above, and was now imperceptibly working its way to the sea. Just at my feet grew a last year's specimen of *Cerastium Alpinum*—the mouse-ear chickweed. What a contrast to the neighbouring glacier! This one vestige of life in the middle of the surrounding desolation carried back my thoughts on memory's rapid wing to the far-distant shores I had quitted so long before; thoughts of home and loved ones, and perhaps even more solemn thoughts still, were not out of place, there, in the presence of such symbols of Time and Eternity.

But my watch, which pointed to two in the morning, warned me not to delay longer descending the mountain, which I confess I did not begin without apprehension, remembering the dangers of the ascent. There was no help for it, however; so I set forward with what courage I might.

Skirting the base of the jökler to the westward, I reached the edge of a steep bank of broken stones, the *detritus* of the rock, which had accumulated and formed a considerable slope occupying the bed of a narrow valley between two prominent spurs of the mountain. My progress over this was neither safe nor agreeable. At every step the stones rolled away from under my feet, and I was more than once precipitated with violence against sharp blocks. At times it was hard to believe that the whole side of the mountain was not instinct with life, so continuous was the movement among the *débris*. It is easy to imagine the effect of this part of my journey—the cutting of my boots, the tearing of my hands, and the dilapidation of my apparel generally. With great delight I found myself on a declivity apparently covered with soft snow. This tempted me to try the Russe Montagne, but unfortunately I had lost my alpenstock. By the aid of my geological hammer, however, I managed to contrive a tolerable rudder; so, seating myself on the snow, feet well kept together and the hammer under my arm, down I went very pleasantly for a while; but the surface suddenly changing from soft snow to hard frozen ice, the velocity of my progress became almost terrific. Happily this frozen surface only extended some two hundred feet, after which there was again soft snow; but the impetus thus given was sufficient to carry me much more quickly than I approved to the bottom of the slope and throw me most abruptly into a water-course formed by the melting of the snow. Rather startling was the transition from the warmth caused by my quick descent to a very cold bath, and rather ruefully I picked myself out of it, and endeavoured to make the best of my way to the ship. Keeping along the edge of a moraine, the remnant of some former glacier, I at length reached a gorge that had been the bed of a wide and once rapid river, which had made for itself a passage in the rock some twenty to thirty feet deep, and about two to three hundred wide. As the river had diminished to a tiny stream, the fine sections of the coal strata were beautifully visible. The layers of coal were but some 8 to 20 inches thick, alternating with thick beds of sandstone. No fossil impressions were to be found in these bands; but, subsequently, I was fortunate enough to obtain specimens of fir and beech fossil leaves from Atanakerdluk on the oppsite side of the strait, where lignite in all stages, from charred wood to fully fossilized coal, were to be found—in one place the stem of a tree, discovered by Inglefield, in an almost erect position. Amber has also been found in small quantities. Thenceforward my course was plain; I followed the bed of the torrent, which led me to the coast, and at about a quarter-past four found myself on board the ship, where my companions had almost given me up for lost.

CAN WRONG BE RIGHT?

A TALE.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

XXVIII.

I WAS in my room; the child undressed, in bed, in a sweet sleep—the hues of a glorious sunset, chequered by the crossed lattice, gleaming on the sanded floor; Mrs. Dunbar by my side, chafing my hands. My eyes and ears were opened at the same moment, and I heard her murmur, “Thank God!” I slid on my knees, and bent my head on my child’s bed. I knew that HE was gone—his presence was no longer near me. May God forgive me, but at the time I thought more of that,—than of gratitude. My child was saved—Had not HE saved it? My attitude was that of prayer—but my heart was rebellious, my mind filled to suffocation with speculations on the Future.

“I met you, stalking like a ghost into the door,” said Mrs. Dunbar, “followed by a gentleman bearing the child dripping wet. He laid the boy upon the bed himself; and when he turned to speak to you—you had fainted.”

“And he left me in that faint?”

“Certainly: what else could he do?”

How my heart beat; how the memory came of that other time when I was left helpless at his feet!

“Did he ask no question?”

“Yes. He asked if the boy were really yours.”

“*Really* mine?”

“Yes, ‘really yours’—those were his words.”

“And you said—yes?”

“I said,—certainly.”

“Well?”

“Ossee was very wilful; and while I raised you, he grasped at the gentleman’s seals,—but he exchanged them for his purse. See, it is in his hand!”

“Anything more?”

“He seemed mightily taken with the child; told me to leave you, you would recover soon enough, but that the boy must have a warm bath and be wrapped in flannel; could I manage it? Fortunately the copper was heated, and Goody Styles washing. So the bath was ready. He waited to see him in the wash-tub. I never saw a man admire a child so much.”

“Well?”

“There’s nothing more.”

"Nothing more! Why, you have told me nothing. Sir Oswald must have been here ten—twenty minutes! How did he look? What did he say? Sate he not down?"

Dear, calm Mrs. Dunbar! I believe she thought the small-pox, or something as feverish, still possessed my brain.

"I suppose you must have heard him called Sir Oswald," she said, after regarding me with her deep, attentive, eyes, a moment, "but he left his card for you."

"And why did you not give it me?"

She smiled, I suppose at my impatience, and placed it in my hand.

"He said he would be glad to know how the child progressed. Yes, I remember his saying *that*," she added, after a pause, while recalling my questions.

"How did he look?"

"As I never saw him before, I cannot well tell; very like most great intellectual workers—worn and withered; grey—yes; and I think bald—yes. For though it is but a cottage (a true gentleman, I said to myself) he took off his hat as he entered. His eyes looked dim—very dim indeed. After going out, he returned—to the child. Little proud fellow that he is, he knows a gentleman, and held up his mouth to kiss him—and I think he would have remained longer, but a number of fine folk came trooping after him, and calling; some exclaiming as if they never saw a pretty English cottage before. I certainly was fluttered, and asked him to keep the fine ladies out—you lying there, poor dear! like one dead, and the child undressed. To see how tenderly he took his wet clothes off! And the little Turk would not go into the tub until the gentleman said 'you must,' and then he stepped in like a lamb. I never saw such a thing. Sir Oswald had power over him: he would not have been so easily managed by us. Goody Styles heard how the gentleman saved him when she went to call the doctor. You were so long in that swoon, I grew alarmed about you. The doctor was not at home; but Goody heard that the party went on to Hampton Court—such beautiful ladies, and such fine music! When I heard of the music I knew what drew our darling so near the water, though it need not have turned you so, for he was soon out again." And so talking on, and on, the excellent woman helped me to lie down, even while twilight was toning down the gorgeous sunset. She gave me some tea, and left me with a kind injunction to thank God and go to sleep.

To sleep! I thought I should never sleep again. My brain was like a kaleidoscope—one object mingling with another. For the first time came the consciousness that Sir Oswald could not, even from the boat, have dragged the child out of the river without his chest and arms being saturated with water; but *she* never noticed it. I never thought of it till then. Was it well that I had not the power of speech while he was with me?

Yes—it *was* well! It seemed to me as clear as light that disclosure must come; the father acknowledge the child—the child be trained by the father. But such disclosure must be made carefully—No, not hurried—it must not be hurried. Yes, it was well that I had remained silent, and was left insensible—such was my destiny.

I dared no longer trifle with my child's birthright. I could no longer dream of moulding and guiding him myself: though so sweet, and calm, and gentle in his sleep; waking, my boy would not be curbed by woman. Nature had claimed her tribute. Had not the boy clung to his father!

I was not free from the motherly fault of nursing the despot in the boy. Wives, while fretting at the yoke, often rendered hard and intolerable by the early pampering of the selfish husband, go on perpetuating the race of domestic tyrants by feeble non-resistance to the wiles and whims of their baby boys. I saw it all, and felt to the full my incapacity to render him worthy of his name and state. How could I—a village girl—have nerve or knowledge to train one of his fiery race!

"*Her page!*" Oh, how my blood boiled, and rushed, when I recalled that insult—*his* child *her* page! And I smiled to think how she would feel when she knew all. And what an ALL—to change her glory into shame, to turn her nameless on the world. Why? Oh, my mistake—my fault! my bitter fault—my CRIME—believing that I had a right to cast away the honoured name he gave me, and sacrifice MYSELF—blindly thinking that I should be the only sacrifice—as if it were possible to remove a landmark without confusing the boundary—as if a commandment could be erased from the tables of the Lord without a rent—as if there were no day of reckoning for offenders against God's law and man's. The law of God as clearly forbids self-sacrifice as any other heathenish idolatry. We are *not* our own, but *HIS*! our souls His essence; our clay elevated into life and beauty by Him; all that is high, and glorious, and sanctified in us, is His—His now, and for ever.

We are so knit together by the imperceptible, but not less strong, network of humanity, that we cannot accomplish what, in the pride of our hearts, we call *self-sacrifice*, without deranging laws that cannot fail to work rightly—if righteously:—and, bitterest scourge of all, my self-sacrifice had failed—utterly failed, in its purpose; there was no love between *them* now. The bitter, sarcastic, beautiful thing!—to dare to speak such words as I had heard, and in such tones, to him! I could have slain her where she stood, all radiant in her insolent beauty—But who put *him* in *her* power?

Oh, to be guided like a little child! What was I, Mary, but a child,—a brief unreasoning, self-willed child? It was such a coil, that in my feebleness I pressed my hand upon my eyes to shut all out—but I could not; a thousand thoughts were seething in my brain. A good Providence had taken up the right and cleared my path! How? At sea again!—how was it cleared? How could I inflict myself on him,

knowing his appreciation of the beautiful? And how comforted I was by gazing on the sleeping beauty of his child! How mysterious! that *he* should have borne him in his own arms—a proud man like Sir Oswald! But he so loved beautiful children! No, not because of their beauty; he loved what he used to call the sanctity of childhood. Alas! what was I but a poor, weak woman, one of whom there are tens of thousands in the world? hearts without heads! hearts without heads: and therein lies the mischief. What confusion a headless woman works, be her heart ever so large! What unravelling must come to pass! If I had but gone to Brecken before this! I could not go there now, if *they* were at the Hall. Then again, how was it that the proud Sir Oswald Harvey, so scrupulously guarded as to mere acquaintances, companied with those Italians? There was a coil between that beautiful convent-runaway and Lady Caroline Mansfeld! There was no kindness, no sympathy between those women; they were “familiar,” not “friends”—those two bright creatures hated each other with the fierceness of demons. I saw it in their eyes.

I could not sleep; I was feverish and restless, and crept softly off the bed to open the window. The air cooled my brow, and the stillness of the valley of the Thames was harmonized, not broken, by the murmur of the birds—their good-nights, not in song, but in sounds which I cannot define, but which all who have listened, while the twilight comes, must have often heard—a little flutter now and then—a restless chirrup—then the boom of a marauding cockchaffer, or the guttural of the rail, or the last settling down of the hen-roost—the soft crop-crop of the cow in the pasture, with a stealthy pull at an imprudent woodbine—the glow-worm’s lamp on the moss beneath the apple-tree—the first throb of the nightingale’s song! Oh, those sounds will calm, and soothe, and tranquillize—or, a better word, will “pacify,” the wildest throbbings of a weary brain, when nature seeks not reason, but repose. I was almost asleep upon the window-sill, when the distant note of a cornet roused me. I knew it well. They were returning then! Could I but see him pass again! I flew to the river; the music strengthened with every step I took; sweet voices mingled together and chorused a popular duet of the time:—

“Oh Pescator del onda,

Fidelin.

Oh Pescator del onda,

Fidelin.

Vieni pescar in qua,

Colla Bella sua barca,

Colla Bella seneva—

Fidelin—lin—la!”

They passed at the other side of the ait; but I heard the measured dip of the oars, and saw the moonbeams rise and fall with the swell of the water. When the song ceased—though I ran along the bank heedless of brake or briar, following the sound—I did not hear his voice again, or any speaking voice that I could recognize.

XXIX.

I BELIEVE during the following, and for some days, my good and worthy friend thought my brain was turned. My child was as well and as wilful as ever, the next morning, screaming to go to the Thames—shouting for more “Too-too”—talking about “pritty ladies,” and crying for the “gempleman.” He had always soon wearied of his toys, but he retained the purse Sir Oswald had placed in his hand, after tossing its contents on the floor—now cherishing it in his bosom—then in his belt—and refusing to be, or to sleep, without it. The continual cry for more “Too-too” suggested the idea of purchasing him a tin trumpet—(Twickenham was at that time proud of its *one* toy-shop)—and Mrs. Dunbar procured a splendid specimen, with green cord and tassels. The boy’s shout of delight, when he saw it, was a proof of the soundness of his lungs—it told far more than words of his anticipated enjoyment. When he put it to his lips, the first blast of discord threw him into a positive agony—he became deadly pale, and trembled from head to foot. The instrument dropped from his hands; and then, while tears rolled over cheeks that flushed as suddenly as they had paled, he stamped upon the toy and flung himself on the floor. Everything about my boy told me that my dreams of tutorage—of teaching him myself, and drawing him onward by the silken web of mother-love—were vain. He loved me—but he loved his own will far better.

Restless and undecided, I knew not what course to pursue. I was an example that “It is easier to teach twenty what is good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching.”

I knew what was “good to be done,” what my heart ached to do, yet I was still in Mrs. Dunbar’s cottage! Mrs. Dunbar reminded me that I was neglecting Mrs. Clary’s last order. Strange! I knew not even where the work was, until she said I had taken the embroidery with me to the river. I searched among the reeds and rushes, but could not find it; the basket, scissors, and thimble were there, saturated with dew—the work gone! Doubtless some of the village children who played along the bank had taken it, attracted by the brightness of the silks, for their dolls. Wherever it was, it was certainly spoiled; so, while Mrs. Dunbar went out into the village to inquire about it, I commenced another breadth. But that was soon laid aside, and I shut myself in my room, determined to write to Sir Oswald.

My brain and hand seemed alike paralyzed. I could not frame a sentence—not even a letter! Why should I not go to Brecken? I could better concentrate my thoughts in my native village, among my native scenes. I could perhaps hear something that would strengthen my resolve. What a weak fool I was! Why should I desire anything to strengthen my resolve? What right had I to think of anything except rendering speedy justice to the child of Sir Oswald Harvey? There was nothing else I could do, or ought to do. That was my great duty. I was a

coward! I knew that it was merely to gain time I proposed to myself to go to Brecken. I was trembling beneath the scourge of my lost beauty, instead of rejoicing that I could give my boy his rights, with the certainty that his father no longer loved the woman who had wrought this misery. No; I, and I only, had wrought it! And then I went over, and over, ALL!—the frightful, miserable all—as I have done to you. Have patience with, and pity me! I had not confided in any one; I was preying upon myself. Why did I not open my heart to Mrs. Dunbar?

The angel was in the house, yet I sought not the shelter of her wings! I would write to Sir Oswald. No; I would go to Brecken Hall, and, taking my boy in my hand, kneeling before Sir Oswald, as at a confessional, tell the whole story.

“Infirm of purpose!”—if ever woman was, I was!

Tenderly—with the wisdom of a mother and the sympathy of a sister—Mrs. Dunbar entreated me to show how she could help me, for she saw that I was sore disturbed. At last I could not bear to look at her, or speak to her,—and oh, during those days, my darling child, how he did try me! His self-will seemed to increase a hundred-fold. If I attempted to sing to him (and music subdued him at once), I burst into tears; and then the little creature would fling his arms round me with all the passionateness of his nature, and murmur, “Not pritty mamma now—but dear sweet! oh, dear, sweet!” and once drawing out the treasured purse from the bosom of his little frock, he placed it in my hand and closed my fingers over it, looking fixedly in my face as if to command, that, as he had paid a price, there should be no more tears.

Dear Mrs. Dunbar was going her cottage rounds, her basket on her arm, filled with those little comforts for the sick and aged to procure which she debarred herself of what even moderate people would call “the necessaries of life.”

XXX.

I ENDEAVOURED to arrange my work afresh. I sat with my back to the door, so that I looked out on the meadow—not on the path beside which the Rue flourished, and imparted its bitterness to every passing breeze—(to this day the smell of Rue takes away my strength)—and was calmly gathering home my thoughts. You know how keenly susceptible I have ever been to the influence produced by atmosphere—the atmosphere which surrounds every living thing. All at once I was nearly overpowered by a reasonless anxiety. I arose to seek the cause of this, and—the Italian lady was before me! Holding up the strip of embroidery I had lost, she advanced into the room.

“This—this was the informer!” she said, after a long embrace, and kissing me on both cheeks; “but *you* must have known *me*, though not until you had left and I found this—did I recognize you. Then

I remembered the graceful figure and the voice of my friend ; but I had reason for keeping my own council. Ah, dear one ! of all women you behold the most deceived—the most miserable !”

She flung off her shawl and bonnet, and yielded to such an agony of sobs and weeping that my own anxiety was swept away by the torrent of her tears : then, when exhausted, she poured water in the basin, and laved her face and brow, while her hair fell round her like a sable shroud. I gathered it up and wound it round her head, braid upon braid.

She drew me to her, and clasped her arms round my neck, laying her head on my bosom. “A little time, a little time !” she repeated : then, after a long pause, “Finding you, has been my salvation. No, you cannot understand, how could you ?—but you will, you will—you *will* speak the truth, I know—you cannot do otherwise ? To think of this meeting ! Oh, my friend, how can I express myself—all will now come clear as the beautiful sky of my own country ; you are my salvation—my salvation. I know all about you, and you shall know all about me !”

She “know ALL” about me ! What could she mean ?

“The instant I looked at you I was drawn towards you, though you are changed in face, my friend : and Carlo, the cruel traitor Carlo, did not know you—it would not have done for him to have known you yet. Ah, he is repelled by whatever is good and virtuous. But it was God’s mercy, God’s mercy to me, unworthy that I am ! *Mea culpa ! Mea culpa !* I will perform any penance—when *this* is over. You have a child—an angel ! You are not going to give him to that insolent woman to be her page ? My friend, she would weary of him in a month—a week ; and exchange him for a monkey, or a negro boy with a pierced nose and gold ear-rings !

“I will tell you my story ! We met in Paris, soon after her marriage. Carlo’s voice—(oh, such a voice !)—his society and talents—(he dances and acts like an angel)—aided his introductions—(I know not how he got them :) and as I dressed like a Queen, and was fresh and young (and all said, beautiful), we were the fashion ; and Lady Harvey and myself swore eternal friendship before such a lovely altar in the church of Saint Geneveive !”

How thoroughly foreign she was, mingling all sensations together, and incapable of clear detail.

“Sir Oswald,” she continued, “never did more than endure us ; but Mi Lady did not mind that, for he lived only to give her pleasure. Ah ! such a husband ! Mi Lady loves excitement, and Carlo loves *ecarte* and *roulette*. All this while Sir Oswald was ill, or studying—(dear, how fond the English people are of that ‘studying ;’ it keeps them so still and dull !) One thing Sir Oswald did like—my husband’s beautiful voice ; that great studying man’s heart and soul is music. But my husband played on another instrument also—the dice-box ; and Mi Lady was easily drawn into play. *That* was a charming excitement—while it lasted. Of course it was Carlo’s

friend who won from her—not Carlo. He wanted her money; but he pretended *then* it was her friendship, her sympathy—anything that such men as Carlo make believe they want, while they talk sentiment and sit at a lady's feet to befool her. But that passed away for a time, and Sir Oswald only saw that Mi Lady had great love for *me*. We parted; we corresponded—and so did my husband and Mi Lady."

"No harm in that—the husband of her friend," I said, "no harm in that!"

"You see no harm in that?" she repeated, while her eyes flashed; "*you* see no harm in it! then I say you are a very uncommon English woman. But truth is, Mi Lady tired a little of my husband in Paris—she so loves change—and we went to the German and French baths; and Sir Oswald attended to his Parliament, and his studying, and will not go abroad. So Mi Lady, dull—very dull, at the Hall—she invites my husband over; and, nothing but to please Sir Oswald with a make-believe of domestic life, he brings *me*."

She spoke rapidly, and with an accent so foreign, that it required all my attention to catch her full meaning, though it had all the aid of that graceful action which is more French than Italian.

"A new plan came into his wicked head. He thinks, were he wifeless, Lady Harvey might leave her changeless English home for a gayer life."

My spirit rose indignantly at that. I considered it a foul slander. I was too jealous of the honour of her who was considered Sir Oswald's wife—believing herself his wife—to suppose she could look even upon an angel with impure thought; but to regard such a *thing*; to love *him*—she, a well-born English gentlewoman! oh, it was monstrous!—a jealous suggestion of the glowing Italian, who limited the light, the glory, the purpose of existence, to a vile intrigue, and dared to call it LOVE!

"A gayer life?" I repeated. "Leave Brecken Hall with your husband?"

"Yes; many ladies would. Do you remember my Carlo, how handsome and beautiful he is; and so clever. What, you contempt him? Ah, you blind woman!"

She seemed ready to fly at me for not admiring her husband.

What are some women made of?

"But," I contended, "you must be mad even to think it! Leave such a gentleman as Sir Oswald Harvey, the best and noblest man in England! She is the mistress of his house, receiving honour as his wife."

"So she does," interrupted the Italian, with her wild look of astonishment; "but what is that to you? What can you know of Caroline Lady Harvey? I tell you, she has supplied my husband with money to pay his debts!"

"Well; she might do that from generosity!"

What a laugh of bitterness and contempt burst from her lips!

"Why, she tired of Sir Oswald long ago; and what she tires of, she hates. She is restless as a panther,"—(how well I remembered once thinking her beautiful and graceful as a panther!)

"It is her sport to destroy happiness—to rend, and leave—(do you not recall what she said about conquering your boy?)—and all to prove her power. I tell you, she hates me! I am younger and more beautiful. She is thin and faded; she has the disease of your country wasting her frame—paling her peachy cheeks; her maid says, that were it not for cosmetics and stimulants she would look a ghost. I like to hear her cough! and, to keep that still, she takes sedatives—and they madden her more; and the worse she is, the more she plays the young girl! Bah! I hate and scorn her."

Was Caroline Mansfeld come to this, or was it the fierce raving of a jealous woman?

"One thing more," she continued; "I could take my husband to my heart just for that one clever thing—she trifled with him until he netted her in, to make money of her—for he is loveless, as heartless, devilish, as a fiend. I will joy to see her proud spirit crushed and writhing under my feet! Carlo has netted her in every way."

"Insanity!" I exclaimed. "Have you forgotten that she is hedged round with the protection of one who has been her very slave for years—who loves her?"

"Bah! bah!" she exclaimed, bitterly. "*Did* love her!—and, your English men are constant! But no constancy could endure her caprice—her——. Bah! It is months since he has met her, except in public, and you—*you*, believe in her honour! *Her honour!* Here, in my bosom—I never separate from them day or night—I have proofs of what would make Sir Oswald, if he be man and not marble, fling her from his house—a spotted tigress as she is!" She paused, and turned from me. "And now comes the worst of all. While I was preparing my thoughts—gathering a cup-full of bitterness for her—(oh, may she not die till she has drunk it to the lees!)—with my proofs *HERE*—when I told him how I should expose her, Carlo has dared to tell me—(how can I repeat it! Would I had been dashed to pieces from that wall the night we fled the convent!) He has told me! (Saints, Virgin, Faith, were all forgotten for that man—abandoned, for my love of him. I made him my heaven—he has made me a hell!—a hell!" She paced the room rapidly, speaking at intervals. "I secured her letters, and told Carlo I would give them to Sir Oswald. That was since you saw me. He dared me to it, saying, if I disturbed him with my jealous pranks, and went such lengths, he would publish to the world that I am not his wife! What think you of that?) He has told me that I am not his wife!—I not his wife! And then his plan changed. He stormed and entreated, threatened and implored me—the mean wretch! yes, on his knees did he implore me to return them—and if he dared would get them through my life; and

finding that useless, he revealed an intent, which now I know he has long thought of, that if I interfere with any of his *plans* (he calls intrigues 'his plans')—he dares me to *prove* my marriage. Do you not see now how good it was our meeting? Now, I can tell Sir Oswald all; and if Carlo does what he threatened—which he will do, to invalidate my testimony and prove me naught! you, an Englishwoman, saw me married—you know you saw it! Have you no words? You saw it! Oh, do not forget that it was *I* who rescued *you*! You *saw* me married?"

"I did."

"And will prove it?"

"I will—I will prove it."

Again she flung her arms round me, while uttering the most exaggerated expressions of gratitude. "Only think, after this threat from Carlo," she said, when a little calmed—"only imagine our descending to the drawing-room, acting our parts to each other, and enrapturing the company with our duets and trios—in which Lady Harvey joins." Again she spoke of Sir Oswald. "I know from her maid every turn of their inner life—they have not met for months, except in public. *You*, who know your own countrymen, can you tell me how he still bears with her?"

"The remains of his old love for her," I said. "You cannot understand the great fidelity, the tenacity, of English affection."

She stamped her foot violently—"I have no patience with him—no patience with him! He can have no remnant of affection for her. She openly treats him with caprice or contempt. He meets it all with well-bred indifference—still giving her respect—'RESPECT' in truth, for *HER*! The other day she said something to him most bitterly insulting, and then left us alone. I spoke to him, lamenting that he had not more sympathy or kindness—I hardly know what I said—from his wife. Another man would have been at my feet and kissed my hands in gratitude; but he rose up like an Emperor, and making me a great English bow, said, while leaving the room,—

" 'Madame has apparently forgotten that she has spoken of my wife, and her hostess!'"

I clasped my hands, and, completely off my guard, forgetting all but my admiration of Sir Oswald, exclaimed, "Just like him; always true and noble!"

I saw my imprudence when it was too late. She was all Italian in suspicion. Quick to comprehend, the smallest clue would lead her through a labyrinth. She drew a chair, seated herself opposite to me, and said,

"You know Sir Oswald Harvey! You did not see him for the first time when he carried your boy to this cottage! I see, I see. Lady Harvey herself observed the child's likeness to Sir Oswald. Why not tell me? Do you think I would scorn you?"

I sprang to my feet.

"You scorn *me*!" I exclaimed. "*You* scorn *me*!" I repeated.

There must have been something suddenly fierce and fearful about me, for she stood up, looked at the door, and then at me.

"You told me you were married," she said, in a subdued tone.

"And that I tell you still, a lawful wife—a loyal wife—loving my husband more than all things on this earth. Listen to me, as I have done to you. What you require of me I will do. If your husband for any purpose attempts to brand you as one who ought to be, but is not, married, I will at once assert my knowledge of you, and of the ceremony I saw performed."

"You will faithfully do that?"

"I will."

"I came to town with Lady Harvey. I told her I had a distant visit to pay, and she was glad; for her maid had told me her Lady went often privately to see a doctor in London; so that left her free—she was glad. I told her not to wait—if I was delayed I would post down."

Here was a painful picture. I saw, in imagination, these two women—knowing each other to a certain point, and hating each other with the hatred of their passionate natures—shut up in a carriage during that drive, discussing dress and music, and amusements, watching the opportunity of inflicting a sharp stab each on the other, and then smiling off the treacherous thought. Caroline, the most skilful; the Italian, the more deeply dangerous, goaded as she was by her husband's baseness, and lashed almost to insanity by an exaggerating jealousy! But when did jealousy *not* exaggerate? Of all our evil passions, it is the one least under the control of justice.

Again she chafed—and paced the room: then suddenly said, "Will you come with me to Brecken Village, and remain there? Will you go with me on the instant to Brecken, and be ready to speak the truth? I know my trial will soon come!"

"I will not go with you on the instant; but, I will be ready to speak the truth."

"And by what name shall I call my witness?"

"I cannot tell you now; but within a week you shall know it."

"You will not go with me to Brecken—now?"

"I will not go with you to Brecken—now."

"How is it that you echo me?"

"Lady, you came to me a suppliant—not a questioner. I owe you a debt of gratitude—I will endeavour to pay it; but I will not answer your questions!"

"Ever the same," she said, and for a moment there was her old smile. "You English are so painfully consistent. Well I remember how we used to say, that all of us, with the Abbess at our head, could make nothing of you. For a long time we thought you a Princess in disguise; and you are silent and cold as ever."

"Your violence has made me cold. Even now I cannot believe that Lady Harvey is what you insinuate."

"You do not believe that I have reason for this burning jealousy?—Here; read those letters then!"

She held them towards me.

"No," I said; "why should I? I would rather remain with my unbelief. The shame of any sister-woman is deep pain to me."

"Ah!" she answered, "they comfort me! I hear her, and see her; and talk to her, and 'Mi Lady' her; and we smile on each other!—ay, kiss each other still. But I know what rests on my heart. There! I press the proofs of her guilt to my breast, as fondly as a mother presses her child; they are my life—my REVENGE!"

I never saw a creature so transformed as the Italian by these violent emotions. Beautiful though she was, she became like one possessed by an evil spirit.

XXXI.

It was a great and inexpressible relief to me when Katerina, "the Countess," left the cottage. She had but a light notion of honour, and would have been guilty of "worming" out my secret, had it been possible; but I fought off her questions. I had no doubt she possessed a power over her hostess which her husband's threat had prevented her asserting. How would it be now?—now, when she had the proof of her marriage within her grasp! She was more fiery and quite as cruel, but not as proud-hearted, as Caroline. When she was really gone, the atmosphere was changed—purified. I could breathe and think. I reproached myself with ingratitude; but her contact with that evil man, and the evil part of the world, had undermined what was originally good and generous in her nature, and fostered her evil passions into demoniac strength.

Tarry an hour longer I could not: I must release Sir Oswald from this scourging bondage, let him do with me as he pleased afterwards; but he must be released. How could I approach him—how would he look, how speak? What matter!

My love could not have been "perfect,"—it had never cast out fear. I looked upon him as Persians look upon the sun they worship. Had they been each to other what I believed they would have been, I do not think—whatever I might have brought myself to intend—I do not think, that even the stern, mighty cry of "Justice to your child!" "Justice to your child!" night and day, day and night, knocking at my heart—could have forced me to disturb HIS happiness. I do not for a moment attempt to justify this. I know that in a well-balanced nature the affections are distributed with entire harmony; the more the heart is opened, the more it can relieve and care for, and cherish and nourish, and give to all, a very wealth of love. I knew—I know—the Wrong can never be Right;

but, even to this hour, I do believe I would have sacrificed my child, *his* child, as well as myself, to the father's happiness.

My married life began on a wrong principle, as all unequal marriages must do; but mine was terribly, tumultuously, wrong.

I felt strong in the power that I could undo the twisted knot. I would set him free of this woman before she was disgraced. I would not trust myself to tarry—I would *at once* seek and see Sir Oswald. Enough of the woman lingered about me—(I must not say “lingered,” for it had a strong hold on me somewhere)—to make me change my black merino for a black silk dress. I wrote a few lines to Mrs. Dunbar, to entreat her to watch over my child,—telling her I was called to perform a duty, and she should hear from me very soon, when she should know all. I astonished the Twickenham haberdasher on my way, by the purchase of a new bonnet, crape veil, and gloves. I hardly knew myself when I added a shawl, sufficiently handsome for mourning. The ferry-man who took me across, a little beyond his beat, landing me under the lawn of Ham House, did not recognize Mrs. Stanley's “school missus.” I soon passed the stately trees of Ham, through the pretty village and by the dear old church, and across the green meadows of Petersham, thus avoiding Richmond Hill and catching the London coach. I slept that night at an hotel, and found myself towards the evening of the next day in my native village of Brecken.

I alighted at the wayside inn, and engaged a room for the night. I thought twilight was long coming; but when it came, I needed no guide to my father's grave. I must see that first—to-morrow for Sir Oswald. I was soon in the churchyard. Above the grave was a tomb, inscribed:—

“TO THE MEMORY OF A GOOD MAN,
GERALDUS KENNETT,
TO WHOM

TWO GENERATIONS OF THE VILLAGERS OF BRECKEN
WERE INDEBTED FOR ALL THEY KNEW.”

“THIS STONE HAS BEEN CONSECRATED TO HIS MEMORY BY
ONE OF HIS GRATEFUL PUPILS.”

Well I knew who that pupil was.

The other dear grave was blooming as a garden; the shrubs I planted there had been preserved.

Twilight was yielding to moonlight; the shadows of the great yew tree, and of the cropped limes that sheltered the entrance, were broken by graves and simple monuments. I repeated “God's acre,”—“God's acre,” over and over again. I felt conscious that the spirits of those I thought of were with me. How I prayed that they might be rendered visible! I did so long for a “sign” of what I so faithfully believed; and yet, when the shadow of a moving substance rested at my feet, I dared not look up; and when the voice of the old sexton spoke, I almost thought it came from the spirit-world.

"Did you know Master Kennett and his mother, that you have been looking after them so? If you're so curious about them, maybe you'd like to see what's put up in the church, with the great Harvey monuments, in memory of *his* daughter! Sir Oswald ordered it. Ah, better if like had found like!—and, to die abroad! No one there knew how a grave should be made—no one! Ah, very sad, very sad!"

I followed him mechanically into the church,—to do, what?

Even if it had been sufficiently light, I could not have read a line, for my blinding tears.

"Ah," continued the garulous old man, "she was a pretty creature—a pretty little creature. And I say Sir Oswald was right,—she *was* pretty! Not near so tall as you—but perhaps you were her friend?"

Alas! I could not say I was.

We sat side by side on a tombstone, the old sexton and I—side by side. Old Thomas loved to talk. The tree-shadows became fainter and fainter. He did not wish me to speak, but crooned his old-world talk about "his people," who lay around us. He never after the first moment cared who I was, or where I came from, or where I was going that night. He was pleased to have a listener; and I had only to speak a word to turn his feeble voice from one subject to another. Presently the bats began to flit, and the well-remembered owl-hoot to break forth at intervals from the ivy-covered steeple. The heavy perfumes of evening fell with its dews; and still the old man talked on. "Ah, fine feathers did not always make fine birds—and there was one often lonely enough, for all her finery. They knew that—all said that: they said, too, a fine place was Brecken Hall, but never quite like itself since the old lady died. She was a mighty grand old gentlewoman; but such a haughty! She'd give a great charity just as you'd throw a bone to a dog. She knew me when my hair was black, and she knew me when 'twas white; and I raised my hat dutiful to her for fifty-two Sundays a year, twice every Sunday for two and thirty years; and poor Master Kennett did count up for me how many times that made that I raised my hat—but I forget! Yet she never spoke to me but once. She came down to the churchyard about having the bough of a lime-tree cut off because her tall footman could not pass under it without stooping, and he following her into the church—and I was digging a grave hard-by. Sometimes I use the pick, and sometimes the spade—the spade was a little on the path. 'Man,' she says, 'remove that filthy spade!' Oh, she was terrible haughty, she was—terrible!—and the spade was a new one! I should like to have dug her grave with that same spade! But they put such as her in vaults; not half so natural—nor, according to Scripture, ashes to ashes, dust to dust—their's the words—and them don't hold with vaults. I sartainly should have liked to dig her grave with that new spade! Filthy she called it! She was a fine woman, but wonderful haughty."

I do not know why, but I wanted courage to rise from that seat and go to my little lodging. While I trembled at the old man's tale, I was enchained by my desire to hear more about Brecken Hall and its inmates; and yet I feared that a word might bring me some fresh agony, or disturb my stern resolve. A carriage rolled past the churchyard entrance—its lights flashing through the trees, so different from the pure, pale moonbeams. "Ah!" croaked the sexton, "that's the old Doctor, from Ratten; shouldn't wonder if he's away to the Hall."

My old, kind Doctor!

"Is any one ill there?" I questioned.

"Can't say very ill; but he's up there betimes, meeting the great London doctor. My Lady often has freaks of illness. And as to Sir Oswald, I'm an old man, an' he's a young one; but I daresay I'll see him——" He extended the long bony fore-finger of his right hand, and, with a low, chuckling laugh, pointed it three times downwards.

I sprang from him with a frenzy of horror and anger; and as I laid my hand on the latch of the churchyard gate, the church clock struck the hour. One—two—(every stroke was laden with memories, all throbbing through my heart and brain—the keen, clear, sharp-voiced clock; I hung upon the gate to save myself from falling; I closed my eyes to keep back my tears)—three—four—five—(visions of those I had loved and lost passed before me; *they* knew me; to them I was not masked; I was strengthened and re-assured by their presence and the blessing of their tender hands on my brow; hours seemed to have passed, yet I heard and noted the strokes)—six—seven—eight—nine—ten! "Ten," last and loudest. I was recalled to the things of this world by the sexton's querulous croak. He kept flapping round me like a raven. "Eh! be ye going to keep me in the churchyard all t'night?"

Before I returned to the inn, there was another spot to visit. How could I tell—but, after all was disclosed, he might desire that we should live apart, taking his boy to his home and inheritance—without me. Well; that was cloudy. I saw no path—I could make no guess; but, while at liberty, I would see my childhood's home once more. I clambered up the wayside bank, as I had often done when a child, and found myself beneath the tree that you have heard of in the early part of my life's history. Presently, a horse cantered up the road, and passed beneath the bank; it was not needed to remind me of the day I first saw *him* in his beauty.

The moon was at the full. I knew the scene best by daylight, for in these early times I had a dread of moonlight influences—the moonlight made me cold and shivering, and my dear grandmother had warned me against it. I clasped the old tree to my heart as if it were endowed with life—an ancient friend, whose lips could feel my kiss but wanted power to return it. I laid my cheek against the gnarled bark, and wept tears—not of passion—hardly of regret; just natural tears that come with *memories*,

be they grave or gay—when they are but faint echoes of voices far off or lost!

How sweet and calm it was! I would not have those dear ones back to this troublous earth—not if a wish might bring them!

I never could comprehend the selfish desire that those we have loved should put off immortality, and—forsaking the companionship of angels and the effulgence of the presence of the Triune God—return to us, to be again of the earth, earthy; encumbered by the cares and pains that are inseparable from those who wait outside the portals of the “Hereafter.” I never could comprehend *that* at any time; but since it has pleased God in His mercy to extend my belief to the knowledge that, the more holy, and charitable, and righteous I become, the nearer are those spirits (united to me still, though before me in the heavens,) permitted to approach me, freighted, like the angels we read of in the Sacred Book of our salvation, with comfort and suggestion, and a heavenly watchfulness, that transmutes the dust of time into the gold of immortality—since this conviction has been afforded, and I believe in the “cloud of witnesses,” and know that my dear ones are near me as surely as I know that the stars surround the earth during the day time, though I see them not—since then, my darling Mary, I have so prayed to be rendered worthy, by works of faith, of the companionship of the glorious hierarchy, and the still more glorious presence of HIM who comforteth—since then, never once have I wished the dear departed ones back in the flesh with me! No, no; I am never alone, never lonely. You often say—“I endure my solitude so well.”

My darling, you have not yet realized what it is to feel that spirits of the just chasten, comfort, counsel!

There, do not smile. Have you never heretofore been called on to believe what you do not understand?

I walked along the garden-paths one after the other, up and down. They were neatly tended, and I gathered leaves, here and there, from such plants as I had known all my life. There was light in my grandmother's little chamber. I crept cautiously round to the lattice window. The curtains were not drawn. I looked in,—it was so still and reposeful. A rushlight was burning within the fender, in a tall shade, and the holes made great circles of light on the floor and walls. “Some one feeble or ill there,” I thought. Had I made a noise? A thin hand pushed back the bed-curtain, and a figure in the bed was half raised, and looked out; then sunk back on the pillow. The room was still consecrated to old age. No light in the kitchen; but the moonbeams played on the gilt ornaments and broad face of the ticking clock—(our own old clock—I should know it, dear ancient truth-teller! among a thousand)—and flickered among the tins, and on the warming-pan. The school-room! Alas, for that dear, noisy room! I believed in it as so very large, so spacious; now it was dwarfed and changed. Instead of the long, notched, and well-inked table, a circular one, with figured cover, and brass lamp; papered walls—

no boys' names there now; though the lads were, now and then, punished for writing them, yet some of the names my grandfather often pointed out with pride to his friends, when the school was up.

"Michael Myles," such an arithmetician, who lived to be a clerk in the Bank of England. "Ernest Grey:" my dear father loved to repeat long verses of his poetry, and declared, had he lived to be a man, his name would have been known wherever the English tongue was spoken. He was an orphan; I remembered his pale, pinched face, and deep blue wandering eyes; he dined with us on Sundays, and my grandmother, when he grew weak and ill, used to beckon him out of school and regale him with mutton broth and strawberry jam, then lay him tenderly on her bed "for a rest;" and, one day, the rest continued longer than usual; poor little Ernest had turned his face to the wall—and died. I saw that dear father show a great tall gentleman in once, who brought me a silk sash from somewhere, placed me on his shoulder, and asked me to be "his little wife, hate Buonaparte, and live in a drum." How my father marched *him* into the school-room, told the boys to give Major Armstrong three cheers and they should have a holiday, and then pointed out where he had written, "Johnny Armstrong, who won't cross the ass's back, but will be a soldier:" and then he reminded my father how he had punished him for insubordination, which my father, having forgotten, stoutly denied, maintaining that he was always his pride. All—all gone; papered over with crimson paper, that made the room smaller, and look hot. A dark-haired man sat beside the table, on which lay an open ledger. I had overlooked him in my dismay at the papered walls. After a few moments I recognized him as Sir Oswald's steward. I almost hoped there might be no light in the little parlour where I used to work my embroidery. Oh that desire to invest the crumbling things of earth with immortality, as if aught in creation continues as it was! There was no light from *within*, but the moon flung in her broadest rays through *my* window. There was the tree beneath which I first saw Caroline Mansfeld,—the porch, matted with roses: there, in that corner—I believed on that very chair—I sat, the morning when Sir Oswald commanded me forth to be his bride. My heart beat fast and low. I tried to undo the hasp,—it was bolted inside. What need? I pressed my face against the glass, and could see *all* within—all. I almost fancied I could hear the tap of my grandmother's stick, see her seated in her own chair, mark the gracious smile on her dear lips, in answer to mine, as I raised my head from my embroidery; yes, and hear her gentle voice, "Here am I!" It was enough. I went out of the garden by the old entrance—out into the road. Strange, that while in the church no thought of my marriage ever came into my mind, but at the gate the whole scene was with me.

I found my landlady standing at the door of the small hostelry on the look-out for me. "I warrant me you lost yourself," she said; then added, "I thought I might ha' had to send the bellman after ye!—but some are wonderful fond of walking in the moonlight, though I don't hold wi'

it at all—daylight for Christians say I, all over the world! and thank God for it.” She placed the little tea-table in my room; but, possessed with the spirit of gossipry, she said “she did not know what was ‘up’ at Brecken Hall; maybe some of the company poorly, as the old Doctor’s carriage went past, and another carriage; but they were always ‘*carridging*’ it, night and day. In the old lady’s time, carriages only arrived at proper hours, and were counted rubbish without four horses—ah, those *were* times! Maybe one of the lap-dogs was ill. She should know from the old Doctor to-morrow—who was coming to see *her*; but of course the old Doctor was very close; and she knew what belonged to doctors too well to ask ‘inquiring questions.’ Still, it was nothing to say, Doctor, I hope Sir Oswald was not ill last night—your horses were in such a foam that I didn’t know what to think?”

I let her go on.

“All the neighbours knew her well—she had nothing to say of nobody, or to anybody; but there certainly were some at Brecken Hall now that never would dare set foot in it during the old lady’s time. And all the world knew what was Sir Oswald’s wish, and what wasn’t Sir Oswald’s wish; though them that ought to mind it didn’t mind it. It was nothing to her—her bit of a house was her own freehold; but Sir Oswald was a gentleman, every inch of him. Poor Sir Oswald! her heart ached for him—and he such a gentleman—poor Sir Oswald!

And this woman had degraded him into an object of pity within sight of his ancestral trees!

“What hour do they breakfast at the Hall?”

“At all hours. Sometimes My Lady will breakfast so early that the servants sit up all night to be ready; at other times, not till mid-day.”

“And Sir Oswald?”

She did not know. We parted for the night.

“To-morrow,” I thought, “to-morrow will make a difference!”

XXXII.

I SLEPT what to all seeming would be called soundly; for, as I lay down, so I awoke—my head in the same position on the pillow, the handkerchief beneath it, undisturbed. I do not tell you I dreamed, for I do not think I did; but I believe I was taken out of myself, and, with sight veiled, but not obscured, I passed the portals of Brecken Hall. Remember, Mary, I had never been there. I entered, paced the hall, mounted the stairs, met strangers hurrying to and fro—among others my good old Doctor. I saw Sir Oswald—not Caroline Mansfeld; but the Italian and Carlo loomed past me like a thunder-cloud. *Death*, I felt, was in the Hall; but, who was stricken? I knew the several doors—the library, the drawing-room, music hall! Yes, Mary, I see you are preparing to account for

every written word; and would do so for it all—if all were recorded here. You would endeavour to prove, that, by a physical cause, or by some mental process which *you* do not understand, but which some very learned and distinguished person does, everything of the sort *can be* accounted for, though it is not, while the attempted elucidation is quite as incomprehensible as the *fact*.

You will say that my agitation, or a disordered state of mind for the time being, confounded the present with the past. You know me to be gifted with belief in a power, which *I* call one of the handmaids of Christian faith, but which you, with others, good people and true, consider as opposed to it. And because of this belief of mine, you shake your head, and ask me not to linger. I do not see that the light by which my latter-day pilgrimage has been illuminated, could, with your peculiar temperament, render you more safe or happy than you are. So I do not "linger." You will learn more of this hereafter, when I am gone and you read the memories of that night, when she who records them is of that other sphere.

I sat up, wearied as if by a night's watching, with a certainty that the sun was shining on a very troubled day. I was confused as to my own identity. Had I, or had I not, seen Sir Oswald? Was I at the wayside Inn, or in the ancestral Hall of the Harveys? What was that dull, hollow sound? I listened with my heart upon my lips. It was early; yet, when I looked from the window, I saw that the village was astir, and groups of two and three whispered together. There were no loud voices; I heard only a confused murmur.

Again that boom!

Was it the clock giving voice to the morning? The clock was not wont to be so slow—it used to be sharp-tongued; nay, it was so last night.

No; *that* is no clock—it is the bell that

"Takes no note of time, but from its loss!"

—the passing-bell.

I saw the groups gather into a crowd—wondering, agitated; every village dweller seemed in the street—some only half dressed. Oh! that bell—so solemn, so stern, so sad—rousing the early morn to sorrow, as it mingled with the first sunbeams. Men lifted their hats and looked up, as if to *see* the sound.

Yes, Death was at the Hall; but, who was stricken? I was calm—I had no fear—I had seen *him* alive; it was not Sir Oswald!

The sound of horses' hoofs—the rider in the Hall livery. He was stopped and questioned.

I heard the word "DEAD!" and again the bell tolled it out.

The village wheelwright had a strong voice, and he exclaimed—"I tell thee, Master Ralph, it be impossible! I saw My Lady pass yesterday, quite early—two ladies. I heard them drive back, near sunset it was—it's

quite impossible! Moreover, at the turn of the road, where it is narrow—and I stood on the bank, close by Master Kennett's old scule—I saw My Lady half out of the carriage window, and heard her cry out to the coachman, in such a fierce voice, to drive 'faster! faster!' and as she cried, I heard another one laugh, and I wondered what new lark was up with the ladies; and then, something in My Lady's voice, as the horses galloped, told me it warn't a lark. I tell 'ee it's impossible! Why, her voice was as strong as a trumpet!"

Then there were half murmured words, and whisperings; and the groom—pale as a ghost himself—spurred on; and one by one, the women, scared and colourless, dropped into their cottages; and the bell continued to toll, and the sun to shine. As for me, I sank upon my knees, wit clasped hands and outstretched arms—I know not if I wept, or prayed, or wondered, most.

AT THE CATACOMBS.

I.—WITHOUT !

SUNRISE, upon the fountains laughing play
 A rainbow-tinted ray ;
 And far the golden, glory-circles spread,
 As she drew nigh the brink with swift and stealthy tread.

One hand the empty water-pitcher bare,
 Poised on her shining hair ;
 While ever in her earnest seeking eyes
 Lay the half-conquered dread of ambush and surprise.

She bends beside the sand-born, welcome stream,
 And in its crystal gleam
 Catches the flash of arms, and turning, knows,
 By martial garb and mien, their watchful pagan foes.

Daughter and wife of Christians ! As she stands,
 With clasped beseeching hands,
 Over the startled face that moment's strife
 Casts a still shadow from the lost bright dreams of life.

A passing shadow ! then serene and calm,
 She grasped the martyr's palm !
 The end had come, the homeward pathway trod—
 Meeting the blade with smiles, she went forth to her God.

No stir amid the rocks, where from the grave
 The living shelter crave ;
 She lies beside the fountain-brink alone—
 She lies ;—nay she has fled, earth may take back its own.

II.—WITHIN !

He stood within the catacombs, where day
 Not yet had won its way,
 Though by one chasmèd rift the welcome light
 Cast down a herald beam, defiance to the night.

With eager bending head and straining ear,
 And heart-wrung brow of fear,
 And lips set fast to hush the yearning cry,
 " Ah, wherefore tarriest thou ? Belovèd, day is nigh ! "

There, by the darkling pathway's upward bend,
He sees a gleam descend,
And greets with lighted eyes and loving thought
The coming radiance thrown before the form he sought.

No lamp of earth around that vision spread
The glory inly shed;
Threading with swift soft step the wondrous maze,
She fixes on his face her fond and earnest gaze.

"Come soon, and bring my infant! I would fain
Call both mine own again!"
A few brief words stirring the heavy air,
A waving robe, a smile. He looked,—she was not there!

So the farewell was said, and his true heart
Took up its life-long part.
He in the shadow waited, while she lay
Wrapt in her stainless vest, hushed in the sunny day!

THE BLIND LADY AND HER NEIGHBOURS.

THERE are few things more splendid in modern history than the public charity of which London is the centre—Charity which embraces in enterprises, great or small, not only all the natural troubles of humanity, but those sadder aches of which civilization itself is partly the cause. Few things more splendid—and at the same time, few things more killing, more destructive of the personal neighbourly help, which is, of all almsgivings, the divinest, and of that heart of endurance and self-support which is diviner still. A certain impatience of suffering is one of the characteristics of this hasty age of ours. The heart of benevolence weeping over a mother among her orphans, does not pause to realize how much nobler is the widow's struggle, however hard, to bring up her children at home, than the ready cribs in half a dozen hospitals into which the fatherless creatures are hurried for pity of their distress. The comfort gained may be apparent enough; but nobody has any leisure to think of the primitive virtue lost. The benevolent English public, with its magnificent tribute-money of voluntary contributions, takes perpetual doses of moral chloroform by way of convincing itself that pain can be annihilated, and that adversity may be cheated of its uses; but amid the skilful organization of universal charity, the more heavenly help of neighbour to neighbour, like to like, becomes almost impossible, and altogether unthought of. It is all very grand and gigantic; but when the Good Samaritan is an Institution, and not a person, the feelings of sympathisers are interested in an entirely different manner, and the gratitude of recipients naturally changes its character. Committees and Reports, all so necessary, make charity itself so business-like a transaction, that, when it is actually possible to come face to face with a personal act or impulse, the primitive freshness and fascination of that tenderest Christian virtue recurs with double force. One such—an almost romantic episode in the history of modern benevolence—comes at the present moment before the world, with a modest appeal to the universal heart which we are glad to take advantage of, by way of informing our readers what sympathy and loving-kindness are endeavouring to do for the Blind.

The Poor Blind! It wants no sentimental description to convey a sense of what that deprivation must be, to every soul that can rejoice in the beauty of the world, and is able to recognize how pleasant it is to see the light. But the want of sight, melancholy loss though it be, is, like every other loss, a mightily different matter among the rich and among the poor. Almost every personal drawback has compensations of love and kindness, among those whose daily bread is secure, and whose comforts are not threatened by disability for toil. Not only in rich houses, but wherever there is moderately enough, a blind child, a blind relation, secures all that pity and tenderness can do for the alleviation of the misfortune. Extreme poverty leaves no room for such tender household succour. The

blind member of a family in which every individual, from its earliest possibility of labour, is engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with want and destitution, is inevitably at the most melancholy disadvantage. If he is kept alive at all, it is only by a self-denial too heroic to be common. He, too, like the rest, must work—or beg—or starve! And, with the heart of a man in his bosom, and the strength of a man in his arms, it may be impossible for him, with those closed eyes of his, to do anything for the bread of tears, the scanty bread of dependence and helplessness, which keeps him alive. A sadder position cannot well be imagined. The weak must go to the wall by necessity of nature; but the strong, with vigorous pulses and willing hearts, and all the ordinary human capacities made unavailable only by that cloud upon his vision—what is *he* to do?

This question went sadly to the heart, some years ago, of a blind English gentlewoman, a Bishop's daughter, in that quiet and retirement from which one might have fancied painful visions of want and suffering well-nigh excluded. Yearning towards her companions in misfortune, this lady found out the hopeless wretchedness of the majority, and divined the causes of it. Benevolence had established schools for them all over the country, had made books for their use, and learned to know what occupations best suited the skilful fingers which had no sight to guide them; but, as heads are slower of perception than hearts, had not yet come to the length of perceiving where the weak point lay in these charitable institutions. The gentle observer in the Chichester Palace, who was neighbour to all those blind men and women in the harder world without, pondered it in her heart, seeing with her blind tender eyes, matters which did not enter into the harder vision of souls less entirely sympathetic. She learned, little by little, what the uncertain guidance of statistics could tell her. How, out of 30,000 blind people in these islands, nine-tenths lost their sight after they had come to years of maturity, and when they were no longer eligible for admission into most of the Schools for the Blind. How, instead of beginning, as cheerful children knowing no difference, to acquire from the rudiments an education adapted to their state, an overwhelming majority fell into that world of darkness all conscious of their loss, and with no possible way of struggling forth into the new and straitened paths of knowledge which now alone could be of any use to them. Of the more fortunate number who had been born blind, and to whom the Institutions were specially open, the greater part ended their training with indeed a trade which they could exercise, but no market kept open for their work, nor charitable consideration of the fact that the blind workman is of necessity less rapid than his competitor who can see. In the course of her anxious inquiries she came to see the instructed workmen of the institution toiling ineffectually in the crowd, and unable to keep up with its pace, while an infinitely greater number, untaught and unskilled, finding all the instruction of their earlier days set at naught by the new disability, could not even attempt to

do anything, but had to fall into helpless beggary, starvation, and the workhouse. These sad aggravations of the original loss which she herself shared, went to the heart of the Bishop's daughter. She was not content with simple sympathy. Nothing less than holding out a helpful hand to those poor neighbours whose sightless eyes appealed to her from the high-road, could satisfy her longings. With labour and pains little to be expected from one whom Providence seemed to have set apart from ordinary exertions, and with practical wisdom as wonderful, she launched an enterprise on her own responsibility, for the benefit of the blind. An undertaking appealing so directly to the heart of everybody who heard of it, soon gathered a little band of assistants round the originator of the scheme. An *Association for Promoting the General Welfare of the Blind* was formed; a shop for the sale of the articles manufactured by its clients was taken, in that part of the New Road now called Euston Road; workshops and teachers were procured; immediate occupation was given to a number of blind workmen who had no means of getting the work which they knew how to do; others, too old to be admitted to any school, were received and instructed, with the certainty, after they were instructed, of finding a market for their wares; and everything went on with so much energy and prosperity, that, in presenting their Fifth Report in the beginning of last year, the Committee which came to Miss Gilbert's assistance in her heroic enterprise were able to report, that three hundred blind people were receiving therein succour and aid, most of whom had been rescued from the workhouses or the streets. Amid all the systematic exertions of public benevolence, the blind lady's brave personal undertaking reads like a page of romance.

The field thus occupied does not in the least degree interfere with the legitimate working of the ordinary Schools for the Blind. There are only twenty-three of those for the 30,000 of our sightless brethren, and most of them are limited, as we have already described, by confining themselves to the instruction of the young alone, and to the simply educational process which goes on within the Institutions themselves. Only a tenth of all the blind inhabitants of Great Britain are eligible for admission to these schools, and that tenth is ample enough to keep them overflowing; but the crowd which stands outside is in darker destitution than the crowd within. To them, with hands suddenly thrown idle, and thoughts brought to a standstill by the darkness which has fallen upon them, scarcely any help has been hitherto offered. Too old for the school, in many cases supposed to be too old to learn the usual handicrafts of the blind, sometimes burdened with families, pitifully disabled in the strength of their days, nothing but vagrancy or pauperism has been possible. The Euston Road Association set on foot by Miss Gilbert tells affecting stories of some of those sufferers, who, falling blind in the middle of hard-working lives, had fallen into deepest despondency, and indeed despair, before the helpful hand of the blind lady reached out to them across the darkness

the assurance of a life and hope still possible. Some were brooding in workhouses; some consuming their hearts at home in silence and bitterness, living on the hard earnings of poor sisters and mothers, for whom in the ordinary course of nature these stricken men should have toiled. One married man, who had lost his sight suddenly from illness, fell, in that dreadful unlooked-for darkness and idleness, into such hopeless misery, that his watching and grieving wife saw nothing but insanity before him to swallow up the intolerable remnant of his unoccupied days. But he was found of his neighbour before melancholy and a vacant life had made him mad, and now works cheerful and contented—a man earning honest bread—in the Euston Road Workshop. Another came sadly, with grey hairs, into that charitable refuge—old, and slow to learn, and with bitter thoughts of the past life and prosperity to which this darkness put so miserable a conclusion. But presently his companions found out that the new learner possessed a world of recollections brighter than anything which Euston Road could devise to lighten their labour. He knew Scott's novels almost by heart, and could fill the foggy London workshop with brilliant visions of romance and adventure which could be seen without eyesight; and the old pupil brightened under the spell he exercised, and regained his self-respect when he found himself surrounded by eager listeners, all reverent of his superior knowledge. This man, who, without the opportunity thus afforded him, must have fallen drearily out of his honest life into destitution and dismal idleness, became a skilled workman, and recovered his heart and courage. Another, for whom it had been thought impossible to do anything—a poor fellow, deaf as well as blind—has made such a resurrection as to be now teacher of one of the handicrafts in this hope-restoring place. But such touching tales could be multiplied beyond our space; and other matters, still more important, call for notice. The whole character of the establishment, however, carries out and repeats the affecting individual action of its originator. In seeking agents to effect her purpose, the Bishop's blind daughter has looked first among the blind; and her Institution is governed and instructed by those who know exactly how knowledge must be conveyed to pupils labouring under a disadvantage which they themselves share. It is the blind leading the blind in a manner wonderfully different from the Scripture similitude, which referred to a sadder blindness than that of the Euston Road School-room. It is skilful blind fingers which convey, to other fingers not skilled, that faculty which would be acquired so much more rapidly were there eyes to help the touch—and of which the blind teacher understands all the difficulty so much more perfectly than the most sympathetic who stands outside that fellowship of misfortune. In the imperfect medium which is common to both, the teachers and the taught understand each other at once. Compassion is sweet, but in compassion there is superiority; and superiority rouses pride. It is fellow-feeling, a different and closer link,

which is the rule of this little community. The blind lead the blind along those beaten paths which their own hesitating footsteps have first painfully and slowly explored, and through which they have travelled under the same limitation which affects their pupils. Perfect fellowship of difficulty and painful acquirement debars impatience, and forbids undue expectation. The blind Manager knows well that it is a real drawback which makes his workman slower than the happier "sighted" workman (to use their own quaint phraseology); and the blind Master knows how hard it is, perhaps with stiff unpliant fingers accustomed to the guidance of the eyes for half a lifetime, to learn those skilful interlacings into which the osiers bend under his own touch. Throughout the whole undertaking, it is the ministering of like to like which wins and touches the heart of the spectator. The blind Foundress dedicates her fortune to those neighbours whose darkness fills her with a tender solicitude deeper than sympathy, because it is out of that same darkness, radiated with love and consolation, that she looks upon her helpless brethren. And who among us can refuse a tear and a smile to the affecting spectacle, or look on indifferently to see this tender blind hand leading the blind out of despair and misery into comfort and hope!

This story might have remained untold—at least, in these pages—but for an unlooked-for misfortune that has interrupted this beautiful enterprise. Everybody in London has crossed at some point the encumbered street from which traffic and passengers have been temporarily diverted to facilitate the making of the underground railway. This great public undertaking has swept custom and customers from the Shop of the Blind in Euston Road. The mats and baskets hang unpurchased upon the walls—not only unpurchased, but invisible to the eyes of purchasers, who have now to wend curiously through back streets, and cannot approach the main thoroughfare in which that modest merchandise has thriven for years. Nor is this all. The great subterranean line of communication has shorn away the foundations—among a crowd of other houses in that quarter—from the boarding-houses belonging to the Association, where their destitute pupils are sheltered. They were all but turned out in the night, a bewildered, sightless company, not very long ago; and with their property thus destroyed, their trade cut off, and redress and compensation only to be obtained slowly when the underground railway has time to reckon its damages and pay for its footing—or for its roofing, to speak more truly—matters are in a bad way in Euston Road. If the Managers obeyed the dictates of prudence, they would immediately cut their establishment down to half its present proportions, and dismiss some twenty or thirty helpless creatures into the world again to grope their way back to beggary or pauperism. But this is what the Committee, Miss Gilbert's friends and assistants, cannot make up their minds to do. An Institution based upon the blind lady's fortune and exertions is one which her coadjutors have not the

heart to relinquish or lessen ; yet, while Euston Road is blocked up, and nobody comes to buy—and while the houses where their poor clients have been living totter on their foundations and are no longer habitable—what is to be done—what can they do ? After a while, damages and compensation will doubtless be obtainable from the big subterranean mole which has burrowed its way under that busy district, and reduced a much-frequented thoroughfare to compulsory quietness. But that will take time and patience ; and in the meantime, is this tender erection of charity to topple down like a house of cards, and the rescued blind to go out again into a world that has no disengaged hand to help them along the encumbered way ? The “ Association for Promoting the Welfare of the Blind ” has modestly, in a corner of the *Times*, appealed to the general heart ; but, contrary to the ordinary usage both of trade and benevolence, declines to spend what funds it has in the prodigal advertising which seems now-a-days the recognized mode of coming at the heart of the public. The Rev. W. W. Champneys, in this advertisement, explains how “ the Institution has lost, during the last nine months, in its retail trade, £20 a week, in consequence of the interruption of the traffic during the formation of the underground railway. 110 blind persons receive the full selling-price of their work ; 40 more (some paralyzed or otherwise disabled) are assisted ; and all are taught reading and other branches of instruction, and have useful books read to them by clergymen and other kind friends. The Committee who have kept on all these afflicted persons will have to discharge many, unless assistance can be obtained.”*

After a while, the ordinary stream of custom and business will return to maintain its usefulness ; but, in the meantime, must the work be interrupted ? Few of us would object to be counted the neighbour of the blind gentlewoman whose enterprise is in peril. Who, then, will be neighbour to her sightless clients, our blind brethren ? Our dear Lord and Master gave no gift more tenderly, or more often, than light to the blind—and a little of the overflowing of the liberal English heart, always so accessible to pity, might well keep in existence this tender effort to throw the light of love and help into their darkened lives and homes !

* Contributions will be gratefully received by H. S. Thornton, Esq., the Treasurer, 20, Birch Lane ; the Rev. J. P. Dale, 5, Woburn Square, Secretary *pro tem.* ; W. W. Hanks Levy, the Director, at the institution, 127, Euston Road, N.W. ; or by the Rev. W. W. Champneys, 31, Gordon Square, W.C.

A KNAPSACK AND FISHING-ROD TOUR ON THE CHEVIOTS.

A WALKING tour on the Cheviots may possess fewer of the attractions that specially address themselves to muscular Christianity than are to be found among the Pennine Alps, or the Geysors of the North. Indeed, as a field for the display of any extraordinary faculty for endurance and fatigue, the hills of the border country, rough and rugged though they be, are inferior to many other localities almost within sight of their own eminences. They present, however, attractions that it may be safely asserted are peculiarly their own, and which, taken altogether, can scarcely be claimed by any other district in the three kingdoms. They possess a capital walking *terrane*—moss, moor, hill, dale, stream and mountain path, alternating in rapid succession, and preventing that weariness of spirit resulting from toiling hour after hour, perhaps, in a mountain defile in Switzerland, or on the monotonous plains of France and North Italy. In whatever part of the Cheviots you may be, one ocean is in close proximity and another not far off; and it may safely be left to the over-tasked professional or the jaded brain-worker to appreciate the cool health-giving breezes that strike the cheek on the hill-tops of Northumberland and Roxburghshire. All the better if the jaded brain-worker retains any of his boyish inclination for sporting, as the streams (which are open to all comers) contain plenty of excellent (and hungry) trout, and the moors afford a by no means despicable amount of grouse and black game. All these recommendations are excellent in their way; but they are to be met with in various favoured localities elsewhere. What more especially distinguishes the Cheviots, and the border country generally, from any other place in the kingdom, is, that they possess a literature—a mass of local tradition, and, it might be said, a mythology, peculiarly their own. True it is that the events that figure most prominently in their literature and traditions must, in their time, have conferred on the place a reputation the reverse of enviable. But it would seem to be this very fact that gives to the various localities their especial interest. What would history be without its crimes and its horrors? If it recounted only the virtuous and praiseworthy, the genius of Macaulay himself would fail to make it readable, or that of the decorators of the House of Lords to make it paintable. The truth seems to be (and let moral philosophers explain it as they can) that there exists, in every one of us, an intuitive sympathy with the lawless and the daring; and, if consent to crime amounts to complicity, I fear that most of us must be considered as accessories after the fact to every deed of murder and violence recorded in history, from the Conquest downward. Madame Tussaud was a sage: there is a private chamber of horrors in every one of us! What association connected with Canterbury Cathedral is so well remembered as that St. Thomas à Becket was assassinated there?

Can any mediæval castle in the kingdom compare in interest with those in which some unhappy Plantagenet was done to death? What wretched murky room, in the most sombre and repulsive of Royal abodes, can vie in attraction with the one in which the Italian fiddler, David Rizzio, was assassinated? And what makes every hill and dale in the Cheviots so attractive, but the very fact that the district was one of the most thoroughly disreputable and lawless in the three kingdoms, and that almost every valley, rock, and ruin bear the record of some bygone deed of violence and atrocity?

That the peasantry, and indeed the community generally, should have been marauding freebooters, was but the natural result of their being located in a mountainous district on the border of two rival kingdoms; but the features and position of the country fail to account for the fact that the aristocracy of the locality, including even the female portion of it, might be reckoned amongst the most criminal in Europe, even at a period that produced such heroines as the Marchioness de Brinvilliers and her Italian emulators. Our sober judgment has been not a little warped by the poetic halo that local traditions, aided by a master genius, have thrown about the deeds of the heroes and heroines of the border country; but, disguise it as we may, the fact will still present itself that they must have been in their day the most unmitigated reprobates that the laxity of public morals and the shortcomings of criminal justice ever permitted to exist.

A glorious thing is a walk from Edinburgh towards the border, more especially in the southern portion of it—and there is no such time for making it as early morning in early autumn—a country all stony and rugged, and hills that do one good even to look at, and which seem to say, "Come, and get an appetite for breakfast amongst the rough heather, the underwood, and the grazing sheep!" Hills all grey with shade—the sun just behind them. One moment more, changed as if by magic—the sun now peeping over the top, and tipping sheep, stones, underwood and all, with radiant sparkling gold, like the nimbus of a mediæval Saint. Past noisy streams, dashing along till it is as much as the trout can do to keep themselves steady, till, other tiny torrents and other dashing streams uniting with it, a goodly river bears us company, now on one side of the road and now on the other, for the rest of our journey. Shepherd, rustics, and herdsmen, resting on their long pole-like sticks, discussing the merits of their flocks—flocks for hundreds of yards filling the wide roads, till the cattle stand still from sheer helplessness; scampering children shouting and screaming with the spirit of early morning; dogs scouring wildly after anything, or nothing; carts with their drivers' eyes not yet open; hounds and huntsmen out for exercise, or perhaps for cub-hunting. Past villages, mills, streams, and again valleys filled with wood, and so deep and steep that the sun is not high enough yet to throw a ray into them. Mark that glittering, plashy brook, in the deep black pool of which lie stores of fat and lazy trout! The water is too bright just now for the

artificial fly to be of any use, so we will not attend to our rods, but take a walk through the dark copse on the further side—a shady, cool, and quiet place, with no sound save that of the splashing brook or of a scared wild animal. Excepting an occasional gamekeeper, you are not likely to meet any one in this place; it has a bad reputation—it is haunted. Walk a little further into it, and you will find a mouldering ruin in which is just distinguishable what was once the gable-end of a goodly mansion. It must have remained long in that state, as large trees grow right up to it on all sides. In that house lived Balnagowan's daughter, Lady Foulis, one of whom, if half the accounts of her be true, we should, for the credit of humanity, pronounce to be a sporadic or exotic specimen of her kind, were it not that the ready assistance she received in her misdeeds from those about her, relatives as well as dependants, forbid the conclusion that she was by any means an exceptional instance.

The accounts state that she was the second wife of the Lord Foulis; and, wishing to destroy the sons of her husband by the former marriage, that her own might succeed to the lairdship, she prevailed on her brother to help her; he making the condition, that, while she made away with her step-sons by her enchantments, she would also oblige him by doing the same with his young wife, it being but one trouble, or, as the gentleman expressed it, "but one fash." The account proceeds: And they got Agnes Roy, Catrine Ross, Willie Mac Gillivoreé Daur, Mackane, M'Allen and Mac Evock, and then formed figures of the young Laird of Foulis and the young Leddy Balnagowan, her brother's wife, at which they shot with elf-arrows—(these elf-arrows, it seems, being flint arrow-heads picked up on hills, and supposed to be of supernatural origin)—but, shoot as they would, they were unable to mark the figures, when one (a spirit) came up and told them that they were not to be hit, but they must take death in at their mouths. So they made a potion of poisoned ale; but it was left overnight, for hiding, in the kiln, and the stoup being leaky, it all came out—some say by the arts of another necromancer; so all the liquor was lost but a very small drop. The lady, however, seems to have had a keen eye for business, for "she made her servant lad, Donald Mackay, swallow it, to see if it was strong enough, when he fell kicking and screaming till he died. After that she made one pigful of ranker poison; but the pot was broken by the way, and it was again all spilled." But the lady was not to be balked by two failures, so she tried a third time, as we read, that, "finding they could not get the ale to the house, and that the glamory was overruled against them, they foregathered with a servant of Balnagowan's, for two ells of grey cloth, a shirt, and twelve shillings and four pence Scots (about one shilling sterling), to aid them in poisoning his mistress." By this man the powder was put on the dish of kail, of which the lady partook. The man waited to see the effect, which, he said, "was the sairest and most cruell that he ever saw." The victims, however, did not die immediately, but contracted a deadly sick-

ness, of which they died just twelve months and a day after. Lady Foulis for this was taken and tried; but it seems that the sturdy yeomen of the border, though they were willing enough to face any amount of danger in driving their neighbours' cattle, quailed before the supernatural powers of the lady; and, being fearful of her glamory, no jurors could be got to attend, so she was shut up in this ruined gable just a year and a day, when, we are told, her time being come, she was seen to be taken away by three messengers of Satan.

The strong infusion of the necromantic and supernatural mixed up with this story might seem to invalidate, in some degree, the evidence of the sterner facts; but, even were not the truths of the principal incidents substantiated by official records still existing, they would be witnessed by the fatal *vraisemblance* to be found throughout the whole story, and the incentive to the crime, and the manner in which it was worked out, bear too strong a resemblance to the motives and actions of erring humanity generally, for us to attribute any considerable portion of it to imagination. In our crimes, we are all mutually convicting witnesses against each other, and the dark deed of one day is but the reproduced counterpart of the crime of another.

Amongst the lower orders of the border district (and perhaps amongst some of the higher), a belief in the supernatural is hardly less prevalent in the present day than it could ever have been in the least educated period of the past. A locality within a mile or so of the abode of the above heroine has the reputation of being haunted by a lady in riding attire, who generally keeps her back towards the observer, walking before him for some distance, and disappearing suddenly in a hedge, or round an abrupt corner. Amongst the peasantry she goes by the name of Braw Gillet, the adjective "Braw" being probably applicable to the quantity of gold-braided hair that is visible behind her neck. On the same authority we learn that "twal ministers of the kirk met to lay her, but after next St. John's she aye comes again." "She is the Leddy Ramsay, and comes to speer for her lord, puir thing!" It is satisfactory to learn that "shee'll no harm you, but shee'll step aside and let you pass." It seems that the Lord Douglas was amongst the ancestry, or at least near rib to the Lady Foulis above mentioned; and he, wishing to have the wife of his friend, Sir Alured Ramsay, bid him to his house. When Sir Alured arrived, he threw him down, horse and all, through a door in the floor of the courtyard to a place below, where he was left without eat or drink till he died, and (still adhering to the same veracious authority) "his horses een may still be seen peering through the dark in the vaults of the ruined house."

Passing the Tweed at any point within a few miles of Kelso, the roads into the central district of the Cheviots present themselves right in ront, commencing at once a gentle ascent through a country covered for the most part with sheep-farms and their never-failing turnip-fields, in the midst of which, and crowning every eminence, may be seen the ruined

houses of past generations, some of them so little altered as to appear abodes habitable, others being little more than shapeless ruins. It was part of my purpose in coming to the Cheviots to visit a remarkable tribe of gipsies inhabiting the village of Kirk Yetholm, the assistance of several members of which I had occasionally accepted in my fishing excursions in the adjacent counties. Finding that there was a short way to the village, by a mountain-path leading along the banks of an excellent trout stream, I left the road to take it, descending at once into a secluded valley, wherein was scarcely a sign of human habitation, or even of cultivation. After walking some miles I came to a small shepherd's hut a considerable distance from the pathway, amongst the hills; and not being sure of my road, I determined to get what information I could from the inmates.

The family, with the exception of a lad about eleven years of age and an infant of about two, were absent at their various avocations. In answer to my inquiries, however, the lad volunteered to accompany me to show the way—evidencing not a little surprise when I suggested that the infant might come to harm in his absence, he informed me that the bairn would get on well enough for an hour or so, when it would gang down to the byres to meet the dogs. The lad proved to be the very sort of aid I wanted; he knew every mountain-path, every stone in the brook, and, I verily believe, every trout in the water; and was equally well up in the localities where the auld wives sought for the elfin wizards—where the fairies and bogles might be seen of nights, and such other useful and entertaining knowledge. With his assistance, and that of an artificial fly (a red hackle) which I left him to choose out of my book for me, I was soon engaged in filling my basket out of the brook. The trout were small, but plentiful, not averaging above six or seven ounces each; but they took the fly sufficiently often to keep (in angler parlance) my basket always alive. As a specimen of the lad's conversational powers, I give the following:—

"So, this is St. Kilda's pool, is it? It seems a good place enough for fish," I observed.

"Oh, yes," the boy replied, "it's gude enough for fish, for the dogs will no harm them; but ye must no fus here in the even, or ye may see St. Kilda's hounds."

"Oh! about dogs; who keeps hounds here? I met some this morning."

"Nane keep hounds here, 'cept Lord Elcho, and his are miles away."

"But the dogs on the other side—a whole pack of large foxhounds, and huntsmen too! I heard their horn!"

"Oh, ah! maybe you've seen St. Kilda's; but I dinna ken. They say that who sees St. Kilda's hounds will see anither warld afore neist St. John's eve. I've never seen them; but David M'Farlan did, and they took him for looking after the game, and sent him to anither country, where he died afore he got there."

"But where does St. Kilda keep his hounds?"

"Oh, just over in the wall, called the Carlons, ye see up the hill yonder (pointing to some grey ruins barely discernible from the rock on which they stood). This water, just where ye are now coming to, is Kilda's pool, where they killed him by 'chantment, they say."

"Killed who? and who killed him?"

"They killed the Lord Gordon of Kilda, as he was crossing just by here where ye took the trout just now; and they 'chanted his dogs, huntsmen, horses and all, and it was the Lord Foulis of that ilk that did it by his glamour." Here the lad began to mutter some lines that, though somewhat differing, instantly reminded me of the old ballad—

"The huntsman bold, of Kilda's train,
Within yon castle wall,
In a deadly sleep must aye remain,
Till the ruined towers down fall.

"Each in his huntsman's garb arrayed,
Each holds his bugle horn,
Their keen hounds at their feet are laid,
That ne'er shall wake the morn."

"So, this is Kilda's pool, is it? There seems some good fish in it; but this Lord Foulis seems to have been a fine sort of fellow enough in his way. I suppose he did not like Lord Kilda coming cub-hunting over his land, eh?"

"I dinna ken how it was; maybe maist they had a feud. But the Lord Foulis no minded wha he killed; he tried his hand on his own people, and when he had killed more nor twelve, the whole country came to tak him; but they found him kittle-kattle to shoe, and they could no do it; for when they were bringing him up by the rope he would fly off it as a bird; and when they brought him to the stake, he ran off it as a stream of water; and when they shot at him they could no hit him—so they askit of auld Gilsey, of the upper byres, and she looked into the black spee book, and there she read that the Lord of Foulis must be boiled in lead, with the stones his bed; and they must make a band, with a rope of sand;—so on a circle of stones they placed the pot, a circle of stones but barely nine; and they heated it red and fiery hot, till the burnished brass did glimmer and shine. They rolled him in a sheet of lead, a sheet of lead for a funeral pall; they threw him in the cauldron red, and melted him down, lead, brass, and all."

The lad muttered the above in that recitative tone that plainly showed he was repeating some lines he had long learnt by rote. The circle of stones but barely nine, are still to be seen about 100 yards above the pool, and are evidently the remains (tolerably perfect) of a Druidical circle, though how any moderate-sized cauldron could have been used on the auspicious occasion, the stones being a good 20 yards apart, it would be difficult in these unglamorous times to determine.

By the time I had fished St. Kilda's pool it was past five o'clock.

My basket was nearly full; and, the fish beginning to get shy, I thought it best to put up my rod. I had a sharp up-hill walk of six miles or more to the inn where I intended to put up, and night would probably overtake me in a strange road, and in the wildest part of the hills. I therefore altered my purpose of dismissing the lad at the end of my fishing, and proposed by an increase of pay to tempt him to accompany me to the end of my walk. This arrangement, however, did not meet with a by any means ready assent. "I might go if I wished; the path lay to the left, up the hill and over the large stones yonder, but he must gang to the byres. The kine must be looked to." An offer of an extra shilling did not seem to be appreciated. "His sister, who milkit the cows, might be away; he didna ken—he would just see me up over the hill; the road was plain eneugh before me after that." I knew well by experience what "a plain-eneugh road" was in the hill districts, and that it was ten to one, not only that I did not find the hostelry in question, but that I might be unable to find any other, and that I might consider myself fortunate if the night continued fine and I could find a patch of dry warm heather for a bed. My companion, however, observed, that "If I'd come anither road right afore me, he'd no say no to the shilling; the road was a gude road eneugh, and not more na a bittock further round than the ither."

"It's the longer, is it? Why not go the shorter at once?"

"Oh no, I'll no gang that gait; I'll no cross the Lanter Burn (or some such name) after day with no one, letting alone coming back."

"Nonsense, nonsense! A fine Scottish lad like you to be afraid of bogles and such like! They'll never hurt you if you say your prayers like a man and don't drink. Come, here's eighteen-pence, and then you'll have made a good day's work of it."

"Weel; the castle and the Lanter Burn is not more nor a mile from M'Cullum's (the hostelry), and ye can't miss it. If ye'll gie me the one-and-sixpence I'll just gang wi' ye."

"Why, do you think I'm going to cheat you?"

"Na, na; but wha kens whar you may gang when you pass the Burn, or wha ye may see?"

"Oh, you think that some one may take my money, do you? Are there robbers here?"

"Na, na; no thieves that I ken of, or nane that the sheriff can take; they are all gone sin syne."

"Oh, the sheriff can't take them. What! are there any more of Lady Foulis's kin here?"

"No kin of the Leddy Foulis they say, but a fearsome thing for a' that."

"What! at the castle?"

"No, not at the castle, but at the house ahint it."

"Well; and what do they do there?"

"I've never seen her my ain sel; but she lived at the katty house, ahint the castle, whar lived Sir William Armstrong, and he willed to get her husband's land, as it was near by his ain; so he made a plaint to the sheriff that the Elliott had reived twa of his kine; so he was taken to the ward of Kelso to answer till it; when he was gone, Sir William Armstrong and his following went to the house whar lived the Leddy Elliott, and, on the black cauld night wi' the snaw on the hills, they put her and her bairn out, and she went frae cottage to cottage in the snaw to ask for shelter, but nane would gie it her for fear of the Armstrong; and neist morn they took her and the bairn out of the burn, where she was lying stiff and stark, and if she was no dead then, she has no died syne, as ye may still see her standing in the burn on moonlight nights with her bairn, cooing it and cuddling it to keep it warm like; and they say that she waits to glower on the Leddy Armstrong, who brought all this misdeed about."

"Why, how can she wait for the Lady Armstrong?"

"Why, you see the Leddy Armstrong and others of their ain kind, and them I will no name, keep their tryste still in the castle hall above the burn, and the Leddy Elliott waits their coming out, as they say she did on the night she fell into the burn; and they say the pair thing died at feud with the priest who lived at the castle and was chaplain to Sir William Armstrong, and so it is to be so till the doom. I think I saw her my ain sel standing in the burn, and the same een my brother saw the Leddy Armstrong with her troop and following, in the hall of the castle. He had been over to Kelso, and being weary and belated, he just laid hissel doon on the stanes within the wall to rest awhile, and after a time seeing a great lightning and glower, he peered in through anither wall into the large room, and it was just one by the clock—for the auld bell that is in the castle wall rang out one, though whose hands pulled it nane can say safely. Then in came a troop of curious things that he could not weel mind; some were clothed in sheepskins, and some in spotted skins, and some had heads fearsome to look at; and there was soldiers and such-like in armour, but the armour was gold and red; and in came the wee men with spotted skins and brought with them the tables, and the stoups, and the quaighs; and others came with one large stoup and some red coals to it; and when they had placed it, in came twenty more knights and twenty golden leddies, and twenty silver maids to wait on them; after came in the Leddy Armstrong hersel, no in gold, but in black velute (velvet), and a gold crown on her head, and she had two siller leddies to wait on her, and she bowed to all and walked round, but ate nothing. After a while they all got up to the reel, and they danced and whirled till no eye could follow; and one of them came to the place where my brother was, to put on her shoon that had come off; and when he 'spected to see her fute and leg like a cuddy's, or a goat's, he saw it was no sae at all, but just sich as a fine lassie should have. Just then ane of the

knights in gold harness came to her, and the moon shining out just then, and seeing my brother where he lie, they all set up a sair cry and fled, first, the knights and next the leddies, tables, quaighs, stoups and all. Ane of the leddies dropped the ring of gold that was on her head, and would have stooped to get it, but was fain to gang wi' the rest; and in ane more minute all was quiet and still-like, and my brother slept till the dawn and after; and when he had walked on the road to the byre, to just where we are now standing, he minded what he saw and turned back to look for the gold band the leddy had dropped; but he found the floor had broken in, and, going down below, there was nothing but a broken quaigh and some sherds, and among them a small gold ring wi' a red stane in it; and next time he was at Kelso he bargained for the ring wi' a packman, who gave him some paper-money worth guineas for it; but it was all fairy gold, for he staid to drink at the horsing-house, and neist morn there was only some shillings in his pouch, and maist like it was a fairy packman too, for nane had seen him afore or syne."

For some minutes past my companion had manifested an unaccountable propensity for keeping some distance in the rear, and only came up to me with a jerking sort of pace when I addressed him. He kept placing a greater and still greater distance between us; but, concluding he was fatigued, I took no notice of it at the time, nor until a bend in the path brought us in full view of a ruined building, showing remains of a style of castellated architecture almost peculiar to Scotland, the principal features consisting of two round towers, surmounted by pinnacles, and united by a screen of masonry. In a moment more the path led us to the verge of a dell of considerable depth, at the bottom of which was, rippling pleasantly and merrily in the cool evening, the burn that had acted so prominent a part in the above narrative. On turning to look for my companion, I found he was some fifty yards in the rear, standing stock-still. I was going back a few steps to speak to him, when he fairly took to his heels at a pace that put all idea of following him out of the question. The reason for his demanding the one-and-sixpence in advance at once dawned upon me in full force.

The evening was now far advanced. The ruined castle, though close by, was only visible by its dark outline being projected against the yellow streak of light stretching across the western and northern horizon. Night was, in fact, rapidly closing in; some dozen or two of stars were shining brilliantly, while below, everything, except the sharp outline of the horizon and the few yards of heather immediately at my feet, was wrapt in deep gloom. I had no option, however, but to proceed, and to trust to the chapter of accidents to find my way. It was nearly seven, and I calculated that I had yet four miles to walk to the inn. There was, therefore, nothing for it but to push on.

The shoulder of the hills that led the path round under the castle was soon passed, but not without a few backward glances at the burn beneath

and the ruined walls above—perhaps I ought to confess, not without some fancies of dimly-seen forms in the one and moving lights in the other. A few more steps, and another bend of the path placed the castle in the rear, and opened a view of the country before me—if that might be termed “a view” in which nothing was visible but the extreme verge of an horizon many miles distant. As I passed on, nearer objects began to project themselves against the sky, and I perceived that I was traversing a tolerably flat country, at a considerable elevation. Now and then dark masses of earth and rock stood out, showing like gigantic earthworks and fortifications—as indeed they were, two of them being ancient British encampments, and one a Roman entrenchment. Though the night was dark, the heather contrasting with the lighter colour of the rock enabled me to find my way without much difficulty, so that the shepherd’s-boy’s guidance proved to be much less indispensable than I had anticipated, though the distance certainly appeared to have been considerably underestimated, as it took near two hours’ walking to bring me to the Inn.

The village of Yetholm is romantically situated on the very summit of the Cheviots. Properly speaking, there are two villages of the name, separated by a distance of nearly a mile, and by the picturesque stream of the Beaumont water. The village where I put up presented nothing to call for remark beyond its good inn and its cheerful situation. It is distinguished, however, by the appellation of Town Yetholm, whereas the other village is called Kirk Yetholm. This latter place has long been celebrated, in border history and song, as the scene of permanent encampment, or rather settlement, of a tribe of gipsies that claim pre-eminence over all others. Their clan-name, Fa’a, they assert to be an abbreviation of Pharaoh, and from the last Egyptian monarch of that name the chief of the tribe claims a direct descent. Without entering upon any vexed questions of genealogy, it is but truth to say that the gipsy tribe of the Fa’as have been known in Scottish history and minstrelsy for several centuries—as may be evidenced by the old song, relating how the Countess of Cassilis eloped from her husband with Johnny Fa’a the Gipsy Laddie. On entering the village where my inn was, it was at once apparent, from the groups of people engaged in earnest conversation, that some unusual cause was operating to disturb their wonted equanimity. On inquiring, I found the commotion to proceed from no less a cause than a disputed succession to the throne of the gipsy kingdom, then vacant. I had come to Yetholm with the intention of paying homage to the Egyptian potentate, whose death had taken place since I had set out on my journey. His late Majesty’s daughter now claimed the succession as Queen Regnant, but was opposed in her pretensions by various male relations more or less remotely connected with the family.

A TANGLED SKEIN.

A ROMANCE.

BY ALBANY FONBLANQUE, JUN.

CHAP. IV.

SHOWS HOW A NEAR RELATIVE OF OUR HERO "WENT TO THE BAD,"
AND WHAT BEFEL HIM THERE.

FROM the first pages of a new story are gleaned impressions which have a great effect upon its future success, and it is very provoking to have to devote them to dry matters of detail. But what is to be done? Shall we ask our friends to cruise with us in our new yacht before it has left the stocks? Will it be wise to issue invitations to our grand house-warming before the new mansion is roofed in? I think not. Let us bide our time. We must have patience and read the bill of the play, dull as the information it contains may be, or else, when the prompter tinkles his bell and the curtain rolls up upon Scene I, we shall make all sorts of mistakes about the *dramatis personæ*, and be but ill able to follow the action of the plot.

There is much to be told concerning the early life of George Frankland, the father of our hero, before you can understand the position which he now holds. He was descended from one of those steady-going old country families who formed a class of themselves in the England of the last century, but that have lost much of their individuality in these faster days. There is no Country now, so, how can there be country gentlemen? The railway train, indeed, carries you through woods and fields, and gives you glimpses of cows and sheep, and a farm-house here and there: but all these things do not make Country, as country used to be. They make the places whereon they stand something that is not exactly Town—that is all! Put your head out of the carriage window as you are whirled along, and you catch a glimpse of a hedger and a milkmaid meeting in a lane. Well, the hedger takes in a penny newspaper, is learned in politics, has wandered about in London, and has seen the sea. The milkmaid has meat for dinner every day, and wears a crinoline! When Stephen Frankland's father was a boy, the village near to which he lived, and thousands of others like it, were walled-in against the advancement of new ideas, and defended against assaults upon old ones, as completely as though a line of fortifications, with rigid *douaniers* at every gate, had been established to protect it from improvement from without; and this through no fault of any one in particular, but merely because Town was town, and Country, country. The time had not yet come in which nimble engineers should escalate the old redoubts, send screaming locomotives to batter down the old outworks, and make into one community the people whom space and sedentary habits had split up into tribes and factions full

of the mutual distrust and aversion which it is in our nature to feel for what we have not seen, and are not able to understand.

You who are accustomed to have all the news of the world telegraphed to you every morning by breakfast-time, and think nothing of travelling two hundred miles in the day on business or pleasure, would find some difficulty in realizing the sort of existence that generation after generation of the Franklands passed in that quiet Derbyshire valley, and the sort of people amongst whom their rough, but blameless lives, were spent. Little did they know, or care, about what was going on in the great world outside the ring fence that enclosed their stony acres; and within that boundary they ruled supreme. They were not rich; they were not courtly; they were not ambitious. They were only thorough-bred Englishmen, brave and loyal, tender and true. At home, they held to the King as long as he held to the law; and abroad, they shed the last drop of their blood in his cause, without stopping to consider whether it was right or wrong. What was it to them what the fighting was about, so that we got the best of it? So, when the Spaniard threatened our coasts, old Guy Frankland melted down his silver and his gold, and, with his seven sons to guard the treasure by the way, rode up to London and laid it at the feet of the Queen, to buy gunpowder for Howard and for Drake to singe the whiskers of the Don withal. Half a century elapsed before another Frankland went that journey, and then it was as Knight of his Shire, to withstand the King in Parliament, and gather together the element of that mighty storm which was to sweep the Stuart blight from the land.

During less stirring times, these brave and loyal gentlemen led eventless lives in their quiet home—seldom strayed from it further than the county town, and then only when some great occasion called for their presence. Their sons were born and their daughters married in the ancient Grange; and such of the heads of the family as died in their beds went to their last account in the quaint old chamber where they had first seen the light. And so Time passed on, and dealt kindly with a race that it had known so long; and great were the rejoicings which in the earliest years of the present century followed the birth of an heir to its lands and honourable name. There were troubled times, in the midst of which the long-expected youngster made his appearance. He was born on the very day on which that most rickety offspring of diplomacy, the Peace of Amiens, was finally broken and the dogs of war once more let loose; though the news only reached the old Grange in time to throw a damper upon the merry-making at his christening. I dare say he was often frightened into propriety and fits, by the threat that the Corsican Ogre—as it was the fashion to call the “uncle of his nephew”—would have him if he were naughty; and an intimation to any of the inhabitants of his native valley that this dreaded individual was not nine feet high, and did not lead an army that was wholly provisioned upon frogs, would have been met with exclamations of contemptuous incredulity. The world, however, was

put to rights, as everybody knows, for ever and ever, by the wise heads that were laid together at Vienna; and old John Frankland was not the only man who thought that the best way to keep clear of the troubles which had produced such a shaking of thrones all over Europe was resolutely to persist in the causes which had produced them, and to see if the earth could not be made to stand still by Act of Parliament. These doctrines he carefully instilled into the mind of his only son; and that youth left school fully prepared to affirm, if not to argue, in any society, that England's decline and fall would date from the day on which her people were taught to read, given a voice in parliamentary elections, and allowed (without disability) to worship God according to the dictates of their consciences.

It was an evil day for these fine old Tory sentiments, and indeed for teaching of far greater value, when young George Frankland received an invitation from a school chum to spend a few weeks at his father's house in London; and see, amongst other sights, the coronation of the "first gentleman in Europe" and, incidentally, the doors of the Abbey slammed in the face of the "first lady." Long and earnest, you may be sure, were the discussions upon this important project—London was such a long way off, the road thither so infested with peril to the goods and purse of the young traveller, and the place itself so dangerous to his moral health. But then, was he not named after the Regent? and would it not be a great thing for him to be able to tell his children that he had seen the Crown placed upon his anointed brow? Besides, the Prime Minister, or the Lord Chancellor, or the Archbishop of Canterbury—ay, or perhaps the King himself—might catch sight of the handsome boy and take a fancy to him. Can you see the simple old couple, sitting at eve under the great oak, which had changed no more than the hearts that had been won beneath its wide-spread shade years and years ago, and weighing these *pros* and *cons*; can you picture them surrounded by the scenes amongst which they had played as children, wandered as lovers, and passed the quiet years of their happy wedded life without a wish for change—contemplating with many misgivings the first departure of the child of their old age from the parent nest? Do you require to be told which of these old birds it was who fancied that the great ones of the State could not be under the same roof with her one chick without singling him out for distinction; but who instantly added, that she could not hear of George being made anything that would keep him away from home? In those good old days there was no necessary connection between pocketing public money and earning it. Pass we over the advice and warnings bestowed by these fond parents upon the elated youth, as though they were intimate—good, simple folks—with all the quicksands, rocks, and shoals in the strange waters upon which he was soon to sail; nor detail the stores of articles, of no earthly use to him in the great Metropolis, which were laboriously devised and packed with care for his use. Many a midnight found his mother's busy fingers at

work upon brave apparel, that was to make her boy the finest of the fine. Those gay London *beaux* should grow pale with envy! They should know a Frankland when he came amongst them! Woe is me! In the very first letter that arrived from the wanderer was contained a long tailor's bill, as his host had said that "really he could not take the boy abroad in the outlandish clothes which he had brought from home."

The boy was sixteen when he paid that memorable visit—his companion some two years older; and under the tutelage of this grave philosopher and friend he heard much treason, as it seemed, talked in high places, and caught glimpses of a life very different from the humdrum existence he had led in the old Derbyshire Grange. I do not think that young Harcourt was a bad fellow, as young fellows went, in those days. He too was an only son; and his father—an idle man of fashion—let him do pretty much as he pleased. He found the *naïveté* of his guest delightful, and lost no opportunity of astonishing him with the wonders and the sins of the Town, till he could astonish him no longer: so that, when the weeks of the original leave of absence had been grudgingly extended to months, and at last a peremptory order, accompanied by a stoppage of supplies, brought the truant home, stout old Frankland could hardly recognize his own son in the fine gentleman who sprang from the box-seat of the Manchester coach, and began to give orders about his luggage, in which every fourth word was an oath. He had been taught that he was the "young Squire!" the heir to a rapidly-improving estate, and he "lorded it" accordingly.

It may readily be imagined that he did not find home-life to his taste after the exciting scenes he had left. Everything was bad and wrong, in the old Grange, from a four-post bed to a tea-cup; and its occupants poor uneducated savages, in the eyes of the young wiseacre who had been six months in London. Great was the disturbance of old ways, and the importation of new-fashioned ideas and things, which followed his arrival; and loud and bitter the complaints, on all sides, of what Master George had said or done. Still, I think that in their heart of hearts his parents were proud of their returned prodigal, with his swagger and his strange oaths, his fine dress, and grand talk about Sir Harry This, and Lady Betty That, and the great row which he and Lord Scampery had with the watchmen in St. James's. There was, to be sure, rather a long bill to be paid for the schooling by which these flattering results were produced; but then, coal had been discovered, and successfully worked in several places, upon the estate, and John Frankland had every prospect of dying a rich man. When the young fellow recounted his experiences of Town life, a cold shudder ran through the old folks; and they thanked their stars that they had got their boy back in safety from temptations which their fondest fears had under-estimated. They congratulated each other upon being very well out of a very bad business. There was one thing, however, that troubled them sorely. The conversations and cellar at Mr. Harcourt's

house had turned the young fellow against his father's politics and his mother's currant wine. He vehemently protested against the one, and threw a glassful of the other out of window, when produced as a special treat to revive him after the fatigues of his long journey!

The simple pair expected that the young fellow would settle down again into his old way of living, and were woefully disappointed. He became moody and discontented at home, and only seemed glad when he had found, or made, an excuse for riding away from it—to Manchester, Derby, Doncaster, or Sheffield, where he would stay for days playing the young Squire amongst the horse-boys and sharpers of a second-rate inn. It puzzled John Frankland to conceive how his hopeful obtained funds for the expenses of these excursions. He knew little of the accommodating character of the tribes of Israel, but was soon to learn how familiar they had become with him—at least by name—as the person mentioned in the *post-obit* bonds of his son.

So, black care entered the old Grange, and sat between the good pair upon their now lonely hearth, mounted behind the Squire upon his stout cob, made the waving corn-fields look thin and blighted, changed the burly oxen into thin kine, and filled the bright spring-time with dark and gloomy days. It did not mend matters for the absent object of all this care to be brought home in a chaise from Salford, intoxicated, by a dilapidated gentleman, who claimed fifty guineas as lost to him by the insensible young reprobate on a cock-fight!

In those days parental authority was wont to be rather roughly enforced, especially by old-fashioned people like John Frankland, who had been accustomed to stand uncovered in the presence of their fathers and mothers when they were men of thirty, and to take their word as law from which no appeal existed. The idea that a youngster of nineteen should go about as he pleased and do as he liked, without asking "with your leave, or by your leave," was a novelty to the worthy Squire. It rather amused him at first—which was a pity, as Master George was emboldened by the immunity which followed his first essays as a profligate, and encouraged to advance still further upon the downward road, from which it was subsequently found impossible to turn him. Come, ladies and gentlemen! draw round, press round, gather round and see the show! Here is a young gentleman going to the Bad; he has accidentally stumbled against one of the devil's footpaths, or has been taken just to see it, you know—nothing more—by a friend. Bless me! how nice and smooth it looks, and what pretty things grow yonder, on either side, just a little way down! Observe, if you please, how—mindful of certain warnings—he turns away, and casually saunters back again to have another look at the forbidden ground. If he only could find some excuse, now, to get rid of his Mentor, and take stock of it a little bit alone! Or, if his friend would come with him a little way! Man is a gregarious animal only in certain respects. We say that we like other people to be as lucky and as

successful as ourselves, and we don't mean it; but when we go to the Bad, we are glad of company on the way! It is so consolatory to know that you are not going to be alone in a scrape! George Frankland fell in with a merry caravan of kindred spirits in which Charley Harcourt was a leader, and required very little pressing to accompany them down that same pathway that we have spoken of. Behold them commencing together the descent! How gingerly they tread,—how careful they are to get a good footing, so as to be able to spring back upon the safer territory! They will go just as far as the corner, and not a step beyond! Oh, dear no! not for any consideration! Only, unfortunately, that last slip, which could not be helped, has taken them a little beyond the proposed limit, and it would look so foolish to go back again! Beside, the travelling has become so pleasant, now that they have got a little more accustomed to it; and it is all nonsense to tell them that it is dangerous. They know better! They will be able to find their way back by some bye-path that is sure to be met with lower down!—and so forth, and so on, till it ends in a headlong race which cannot be checked, and a crashing fall—head over heels—into the Slough of Despond below.

The measures which old John Frankland took to stop his son in his downward course only urged him forward. He tried to pull him up short all at once, and the youth turned restive, took the bit between his teeth, and bolted. The sturdy country gentleman spoke very plain English, and was, I am afraid, too honest a man to be a good diplomatist. First, he commanded the rebel to return to his allegiance; then he entreated him, for his mother's sake, to amend; then he swore at him; and then—he knocked him down! The last argument was a clencher. There was no further dispute; and the next they heard of Master George was, that he had started off for London.

The rest is the old story. His father disowned, and determined to disinherit, him. His mother wept over him in secret, and furtively sent off small sums of money, pinched out of her savings, to young Harcourt for her prodigal, with prayers for his recovery—as is the fashion with our English mothers, God bless them! when thus afflicted. Has it not been said elsewhere that Providence never creates a scamp without raising up half a dozen tender, loving women, humbly to advocate his cause and become his patient victims? Has the time yet come when the words may be blotted out?

Wearily passed the days with the old couple, and about once a month John Frankland swore that the lawyer should be sent for “to-morrow” to alter his will, and pass the estate, for the first time for nine generations, out of the direct line. But the morrow that was to do this act of justice never came, until at last the sun dawned upon one which found the good Squire sitting, as was his wont at night, with his great Bible upon his knee, open at the 15th chapter of St. Luke, but quite dead and cold, with a placid smile upon his lips. In his old-fashioned way he had been wont to follow

the lines with his forefinger as he read, and this had stiffened upon the words, "But when he was a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." The prodigal was forgiven!

George was at this time travelling on the Continent with *his wife*. He had run through everything that he could borrow upon his inheritance, and, not having a shilling to support himself—had married. If it be a creditable thing to marry for love when you do not know but that you will have to send the object of your affections to the workhouse for support, let him have all the advantage which his conduct deserves. If there ever was a woman well calculated to redeem a scamp and pull him through his difficulties, that woman was Hester Frankland—born Grant—the eldest daughter of Captain Trevor Grant, R.N.; but her face was her fortune, and circumstances—carefully concealed by the ardent bridegroom, or the marriage never would have taken place—made it necessary that his honeymoon-trip to Paris should be lengthened into a residence in that capital, notwithstanding that certain officers of the law were most anxious that he should return to the land of his birth and the jurisdiction of the Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. There were too many people, however, interested in the death of old John Frankland to allow of it being long kept a secret from his heir. He came back to London post haste, was instantly arrested for debt, and, under his wife's directions, put his affairs into the hands of an old friend of her father's—a great family solicitor in Lincoln's Inn Fields—a sharp man and a hearty, well accustomed to wage war with the tribes of Israel on behalf of youthful heirs, and to attend to the careful nursing of invalid estates. It was good to see the honest lawyer dealing with the harpies who had marked out Master George as their prey for life, and sending them out of his office gnashing their teeth with rage at being obliged to receive back their principal with only forty-five per cent. as profit on the loan. Better still to observe the speechless agony of those who had grasped at too much, and were forced to give up their bonds for the price of the stamp to escape a prosecution for usury. Best of all, to see the conscience-stricken debtor tended in the vile sponging-house by his true wife, and carried by her from thence, when his fever had abated, down, by easy stages, to the Derbyshire valley, where another and happier life was to be commenced.

I think that, probably, the very worst thing that can happen to a young fellow with a proclivity towards the Bad, is for him to get lightly out of some scrape which he thinks, and which *ought to be*, a bad one. His escape tempts him to try his luck again—just as winning a heavy stake upon his first throw induces the embryo gambler to go on, although he knows all the odds are against him. The estate had to be heavily encumbered before George Frankland could be got out of the clutches of the Sheriff's officer; but the income of those coal-fields of which we have already heard, under the management of an engineer whom Mr. Coleman

the lawyer had sent down to work them, went on increasing in such an absurd manner as to give him a prospect of being able to pay off all the mortgages, and be a richer man than any of his family before him, ere his eldest son was breeched. Gentle Hester was good enough to delay as little as might be the coming of this good time, and the usual "finest child of his age," &c. &c., who subsequently became Captain Stephen Frankland, was born on the 18th of July, 1830. Now, long-suffering reader, don't you find yourself emerging from the bye-paths of this long digression? Bear with me yet a little longer, and the main road will soon be in view.

Old Mrs. Frankland lived just long enough to hear her grandson's first prattle—and then she passed away, glad, I think, to be at rest and join the faithful partner of her happier years. For a time Master George was busy enough with his alterations and improvements; he liked playing the great man dearly, and his life in the old Grange, with his beautiful wife and child, was a blameless and a useful one. It was not to last very long. Within a year of his mother's death Hester found he was growing fidgety, and tired of his new hobbies, so, with her usual good tact, she made no opposition to what she saw was inevitable. Only when he had determined to go to London, just for awhile, to talk matters over with Coleman, she quietly made up her mind to go with him—and she went.

First of all, much against her will, she had to be presented at Court, and to make the acquaintance of the Harcourts, and all the grand people who had petted her handsome husband in his bachelor days. Then having accepted their hospitality, it had, of course, to be returned; and, a dissolution of Parliament having taken place, who so fit to represent his native county in the coming struggle for Reform as the dashing young Whig? The coal-pits had to be worked apace, I promise you, to keep full the purse that had such drains upon it; and they were not lessened when the Bill of 1830 passed, and Lord Grey fulfilled the darling desire of his young supporter by making him a Baronet. Long and earnestly did Hester struggle to win her husband from a course of life that she detested. Political distinction was his ambition now; and this, he supposed, could be gained through the instrumentality of his wine-merchant and confectioner. It was all nonsense Hester's talking about retrenchment, and paying off the mortgages. That would keep for a year or two; it would all come right in the end. The coal-mines would go on improving, and pay for all—and so, if you will believe me, they did, and I have heard of other properties of a similar nature which are now running a neck-and-neck race with a spendthrift owner, and distancing the constable. There are no diamonds like the black ones, when all goes well in the getting; and Sir George continued his brilliant career, until, one day, a collier struck his pick in the wrong place, and a stream that no one had dreamed of poured in, flooded the pit, burst its way into the lower levels, chasing the panic-stricken miners to death along the dark passages, and, utterly ignoring all attempts to pump it out, made the rich Frankland

Colliery into a dismal subterranean lake, from which no shilling of profit was ever again to arise.

In the midst of this hopeless ruin came the heaviest blow of all. George Frankland lost his good, patient, loving wife, and, to his credit be it spoken, he mourned for her like a man. There was no doubt about the extent of his ruin this time. It was the real, unadulterated article; and if it had not been for the allowance made to him by the Court of Chancery for the support of his child, out of the little patrimony that had been settled on the boy through his mother, the new Baronet must have begged or stolen for a living—for he had not the wit to work for one—for every stick and stone of his inheritance were eaten up by encumbrances. So great, however, was his talent for getting into scrapes, that neither grief nor poverty could keep him out of hot water. Having nothing else to do, he indulged about this time in an amour, the consequences of which embittered the remainder of his life—as we shall see before long.

Now, old Mr. Coleman, the lawyer, had a son who, about this time, began to manage the business; and this son had a wife who, in all other matters, had long ago begun to manage *him*; and as this lady will not be an unimportant personage in my story, I may as well present her at once. She was a woman with a mission, and that mission was, to marry every body. She had married her seven sisters; she had married most of her school-friends; she had married herself; and her first care, after taking a fancy to bachelor or spinster, was, to find out some one with whom to entangle them in the noose matrimonial. At first this mission was proceeded with upon sentimental grounds. The poor things yearned towards each other, and it was cruel not to bring them together! Later on, when her own household cares—for the elder Coleman was a frugal old fellow, and liked young people to try their experience and work their way—convinced her that true love was, after all, an imperfect substitute for legs of mutton, she modified her views considerably; and, still bent as resolutely as ever upon putting an end to celibacy amongst all her friends and acquaintances, determined that they should not make any marriages but *good ones* in the £ s. d. consideration of the term. George Frankland was a prime favourite with the busy lady; and the grass was not green over poor Hester's grave before she began to look out for a rich wife for the interesting and insolvent mourner. "Now, my dear," she said one evening to her lord, "do think if you have not got some very rich client with an only daughter, who would do for poor George!" The possibility of poor George not "doing" for the only daughter did not occur to his well-wisher.

To this and similar requests her spouse had but one reply, "My love! *business!*" By which it was meant that clients, and all pertaining unto them, were things upon which no home influences were to be brought to bear. It was a maxim in the Coleman family that they were to be lodgers in their own houses, but autocrats in "the office." No wives or daughters

were allowed to enter the precincts of this somewhat musty domain, and the transactions therein conducted were preserved as secrets to which the boldest did not presume to refer.

But though that one word "*business*" was plainly understood to mean an unconditional rejection of Mrs. Coleman's petition, it was business which after all supplied the very article for which she was in search.

In the spring which followed Hester's decease, Coleman, Son, and Company had a great patent case for trial in Westminster Hall, and "Son" obtained permission to invite one of the parties, a Staffordshire iron-master, to his house in Guildford Street to dinner. He came, and not alone. He had taken the liberty, he said, to bring his little girl, who had come up with him to see the Town. This iron-master was not the man to let his light shine under a bushel. He would very soon let you know what he was! He talked money, thought money, clinked sovereigns at you in his breeches pocket, and reckoned up you and yours by what you were worth in pounds, shillings, and pence. Before the cloth was off the table Mrs. Coleman had marked out that little girl as the heiress who was to "do" for poor George.

When the gentlemen had discussed their wine and entered the drawing-room, they found the pair with their arms round each other's waists, as though they had been bosom friends all their lives. The person whom Mr Tremlett, the iron man, had spoken of as his "little girl," was his niece, a remarkably artificial young lady of eighteen, full of accomplishments and utterly destitute of common sense—afflicted, moreover, with that painful giggling and affectation of superiority which, even in these later days, is not unknown amongst girls who have been accustomed to the homage of a small country town. Mrs. Coleman expressed herself as taking *such* an interest in the sweet motherless child; and would her father trust her with them whilst he remained in town, and she (the disinterested matron) would be *so* happy to take her to the Lady Mayoress's Ball, and the Botanical Fête, by way of showing her the lions? Rough, purse-proud old Tremlett made great fuss over the proffered hospitality, accepting it at last quite as a favour to the Colemans. His lawyer winced as he heard it urged, knowing full well towards what it tended; but the Lady Mayoress's Ball and the Botanical Fête were not to be considered as "*business*" in any light, so he was compelled to be silent. Tremlett chuckled in his sleeve at getting so well rid of his "little girl" for awhile, for he had ideas of enjoying himself in London, with the carrying out of which that young person's company seriously interfered. No one knew him in the great metropolis, and he could do as he pleased. So Rhoda, the heiress, took up her quarters in Guildford Street. And who danced with her all night at the Mansion House? And who, by some curious coincidence, was entering the gate at Chiswick just as Mrs. Coleman and her young charge drove up? and who found an excuse for calling at the house about every other day, and was invariably pressed to stay and spend the evening, just to look at

dear Rhoda's beautiful drawings—just to hear dear Rhoda sing—just to be ready to escort them in case a box at the Opera might be sent, as it sometimes was, at the last moment? Who, but the pale and interesting young Baronet, about whose virtues in the midst of hardship and sorrows good Mrs. Coleman was so eloquent! When the patent case was over, and judge and jury had deliberately determined that the man who had spent half his life, and all his fortune, in working out the new process which was saving Mr. Tremlett so much money had not the slightest right to profit by the invention, and it was time to get back to Staffordshire, Miss Rhoda begged hard to be allowed to stay a little longer with her dear friends, and, after a good deal of fuss as before, was allowed to do so. Nothing would have induced Mrs. Coleman to pry into her visitor's desk,—but young ladies are so careless; and this one having written "Rhoda Frankland, Lady Frankland"—no doubt to see how it would look—upon a scrap of paper which, somehow or other, fell into the possession of her hostess, that valuable manuscript was handed, with many a nod and smile, to Sir George, who was not slow to act upon the hint it contained.

The course of true love ran very smooth as far as the principal parties were concerned; but, in reply to the long letter to Rhoda's uncle, in which Frankland formally demanded her in marriage, came the iron-master himself, crimson with fury, in a yellow post-chaise, in which he whisked off the weeping bride elect, without even allowing her time to pack up her finery; and he never rested until he had her safe once more amidst his furnaces. "What! his niece, who was wuth (Coketown for worth) her fifty thousand, married to a beggarly Baronet whom his foreman could buy up? Not if he knew it!"

Know it he certainly did not—the contracting parties, assisted by their ally in Guildford Street, took good care of that! But married she determined to be, and to the person thus slightly indicated, as was foretold in a very prettily-written pink note which was found upon her dressing-table one morning about a fortnight after her forced return. She was very sorry indeed to disobey her dear papa, but dearest George was waiting under the window to take her to Scotland, and by the time this was read she should be his wife.

Now Rhoda Tremlett had been made a ward in Chancery upon the death of her parents, and there are inconveniences attached to an elopement with young ladies so circumstanced, which, had Mr. Coleman made his wife a little more acquainted with "business," she might not have allowed her favourite to risk; or, having risked them, would have warned him to keep out of the jurisdiction of the Right Honourable Henry, Baron Brougham, of Brougham, in the county of Westmoreland, Lord High Chancellor of England. As it was, no time was lost in acquainting that high functionary with what had happened to a young lady towards whom he stood in *loco parentis*; and after a short week's felicity, the radiant bridegroom, committed for contempt of court, had to pass the remainder

of his honeymoon a prisoner in the King's Bench! Rhoda opened wide her languid eyes, and declared that it was really very hard upon poor Georgey. What had he done? She had been quite as naughty as he; would they lock her up in a dreadful prison too? Was Georgey chained up very tight? and please might she send him his slippers and a bottle of smelling-salts to revive him, poor dear? Having vented her grief in this heart-broken strain, My Lady carefully strapped a little coat on her Italian greyhound, and took him out for an airing in an open carriage.

Dearest Georgey by no means relished his fate—which, by the way, would have been shared by the good-natured matchmaker, his ally, if the interesting condition in which she annually appeared had not mollified the Chancellor, and concentrated his wrath upon the principal delinquent.

For a man accustomed to change and excitement, who has no internal resource of any kind to pass the time, and to whom his own company is the dulllest in the world, a prison-room—furnish it as you will—is a terribly gloomy place. "Poor Georgey" was very ready from the first to submit, and "purge his contempt;" but the Court of Chancery has but little faith in such sudden conversions, and gave its prisoner every opportunity of ascertaining, by profound meditation, the real state of his feelings. The case was indeed a bad one. Here was a young man who had dissipated what was, in fact, two fortunes, before he was four-and-twenty; who was a gambler and a ne'er-do-well, and who had run away with a ward of the Court—of course for her money—and married her in defiance of her nearest relative and the law! Six months' imprisonment was but a light infliction for such conduct; and at the end of that time it was intimated, that, when the delinquent had executed a post-nuptial settlement that would be satisfactory to his wife's relations, he might petition for his release from durance. It was not an easy thing for him to satisfy his wife's relations—represented, of course, by her injured uncle. If the angry iron-master had his will, "dearest George" would have left the King's Bench in his coffin, but not otherwise. Fortunately for the prisoner, however, he went a little too far in his opposition, and the Chancellor took the matter into his own hands. The whole of Lady Frankland's property was settled upon herself for life, and after her death upon her husband, until her eldest son came of age. When this was done, the life interest in a sum of money which, with good management, would produce about £150 a year, was, after almost superhuman exertions on the part of Mr. Coleman, bestowed upon the Baronet by his wife's trustees.

The old house in Derbyshire had been let for a short time; but now the mortgagees had foreclosed, and the estates, with the exception of two outlying farms which were entailed, were in the market. Lady Frankland's money had to be invested somehow, and she fancied exceedingly the idea of going down to the old Grange, and playing the grand lady amongst the simple Derbyshire folks. In this, she was ably backed up by

Mrs. Coleman. "Don't you see, my dear, that you cannot possibly do better? If you settle in any other place, you will come as strangers—there you take your place at once as an old county family." "Bother your old county families!" the sturdy iron-master exclaimed, when this view was presented to him; "many of them aint *wuth* nought. I could buy up a dozen like Franklands! Beggarly lot!" However, as good luck would have it for My Lady's ambition, an eminent conveyancer, to whom the deeds had been submitted, discovered that three hundred years ago somebody had done or omitted something which made a flaw in the title, and consequently the value of the land was seriously depreciated to any one but a Frankland; and yet a Frankland could have it at the market price, and hold it safely against the world. So the waving corn-fields and the fat pastures, the great rugged Tor and all it looked down upon—the scenes, as we know, of Captain Stephen's day-dreaming—were knocked down to Lady Frankland's trustees, certain conditions having been arranged between them and the Baronet before they would consent to bid for the property. The conditions were by no means favourable to Sir George; and in justice to him it must be stated, that the most humiliating items were proposed to him whilst in durance vile, and he was somewhat unfairly held to his acceptance of them when, through no favour of the proposers, he obtained his liberty. He was so thoroughly cowed and broken down in body and mind by that short imprisonment, that if his wife's relations had required him to sweep a crossing for five years, as a penance for his sins, I believe he would have gladly promised to do so. He was one of those people, you see, who never consider the future consequences of an act, provided its first-fruits give pleasure or cause a temporary cessation of pain. The conditions actually made came shortly to this: Frankland and the estate were to change names. "If my gal's fortune buys the place," said the iron-master, "it shall be called after her. I'll have no mistake about it. And if her young 'uns expect to get my brass they must bear my name. I'll have no county-familying it."

So Sir George Frankland became Sir George Tremlett, and his Lady's eldest son Francis of that ilk, and it was held a high crime and misdemeanour down on the Derbyshire estate to call the old house—to which a modern front had been added of the most florid Italian style—by any other name than its new one of "Tremlett Towers."

Sir George and Mr. Harcourt remained firm friends—having many weaknesses in common; and it was through the interest of the latter that Stephen obtained his cadetship. His age—suggested in the first pages of this history—will show you what time has elapsed between the changes above mentioned and the year in which our history begins. The quiet Franklands have long been forgotten, and the purse-proud and ostentatious Tremletts reigned in their stead. Mr. Coleman, moderately enriched by the railway mania of 1846, had retired from the active practice of his

profession, and built himself a house near "The Towers;" for, having kept himself out of the quarrel between his wife and old Tremlett, he had been appointed to manage the estates; and such was the confidence which the iron-master had in his care and skill, that he transferred to him by will the trusts in Lady Tremlett's marriage settlement, and left him sole executor of the large property which went to swell that lady's wealth. To console the lawyer for forsaken associations, a room, into which no one was allowed to penetrate, was fitted up in the new house, and made as fusty as possible, in imitation of the office in Lincoln's Inn, and "My love, business!" continued to warn his wife off the subjects which pertained to this sanctum.

Now, Mr. Prompter, I think you may ring your bell; for the scene is set, the actors are dressed and in their places; and hark! the big drum is thumping the final notes of the overture. So now we may up with the curtain and begin.

CHAP. V.

SIR GEORGE TREMLETT LEAVES HOME ON BUSINESS.

I HAVE intimated that the old Grange, which had seen the first and the last of so many generations of Franklands, had to be "improved" to suit the tastes of the new family. In vain was the obstinate iron-master told that it was one of the best specimens of the genuine Tudor-gothic style of architecture in the kingdom. He would reply, that he did not care for Tudor, nor for Gothic neither. Who were they? Rubble and Square of Wolverhampton built his house, he said, and they should build his niece's. *They* were respectable tradesmen, they were; and so Tudor and Gothic might be, for aught he knew, but they should not have *his* money. He evidently thought that the style mentioned was one adopted by some existing firm of builders. He would have nothing to do with their new-fangled fid-fads. Give *him* a nice white wall, plenty of plate glass in the windows, and green Venetian blinds! *He* liked a house to stand up square and handsome, right upon the road, so that people could see it—*he* did! That old place down in Derbyshire might do very well for Franklands, and such like; but it was only fit to make servants' offices for his gal. So, as I have said, a modern Italian front was added, of which the walls were very white, and the plate-glass of the widest, and the Venetian blinds behind it of the vividest green that could be laid on.

The ancient mansion faced east and west, looking straight over the valley; the new portion partly turned its back upon it, and looked south—a drive having been made to bring the visitors round to the new entrance. The principal reception-rooms were all in the portion designed by those eminent builders, Messrs. Rubble and Square, and of the remainder only two apartments escaped the doom which old Mr. Tremlett had pronounced. These were what once had been the main hall, and a small chamber with

an oriel window at the westernmost extremity of the principal wing. The oak carvings which formed the wainscot of the hall and ornamented its staircase were recommended to the admiration of the iron-master, and he is reported to have said, that they would look "something like" if painted French white and pecked out with plenty of gilding. It was only when told that they were worth from five to ten pounds the square foot to sell again in Wardour Street that he saw their beauty, and after this, was wont to brag, amongst his chums, of the carvings "all over heathen mythology and that, you know," which "artist chaps" came to see in his gal's house.

The old hall was changed into a billiard-room, and My Lady appropriated, as her boudoir, the cozy little chamber with the oriel widow. It was such an accommodating little room—so cool in summer, and snug when the cold weather set in! My Lady could not bear the cold weather. My Lady had a rooted aversion to being warm. The room with the oriel window was a quiet, sleepy, indolent place, and suited Rhoda Lady Tremlett exactly. As a girl, she had had her ears boxed for daring to do something for herself; and under her fond purse-proud uncle's tuition she soon got over the weakness of self-dependence, and learned to do nothing at all with infinite grace and great assiduity.

A lady's age is a mystery which politeness forbids us to fathom too nearly. We know, however, that Miss Rhoda took that secret trip to Gretna Green when she was, in the estimation of the law, "an infant;" and a remarkably fascinating and superbly-attired infant she was. We likewise are aware that Lady Tremlett's eldest son is two-and-twenty at the commencement of this story, which—(bother take all these details!)—has hardly yet commenced. We may gather, therefore, that she is no longer young. She must be every day of forty, and yet she looks quite girlish of a morning, in her elegant morning wrapper of clear muslin fastened round her waist with a blue sash, and her fair hair gathered up into a coquettish knot of curls. She is wonderfully well preserved—complexion, figure, and all. It would be curious if she were not. What has she to make her look old before her time! Care killed a cat, we know, and cats have nine lives; but let him do his worst, he will never kill My Lady, though she has only one.

It was breakfast time at Tremlett Towers, and the letters which had come by the morning post for the family were laid out, with the cold beef and fowls, upon the glittering sideboard. There were one or two feminine-looking epistles for Lady Tremlett; some newspapers, several reports of charitable institutions, pamphlets, and letters from Oxford friends for Mr. Francis; and for Sir George a whole pack of communications, which looked painfully like tradesmen's bills—all but one, which was rather peculiar. It was a large sheet of common rough paper folded together in a very inartistic manner, and sealed with the impression of the top of a thimble. The direction—written in an illiterate hand—was "*To Mr. Sir George*

Frankland, Care of Attorney Coleman Lincolns Inn London." A pen had been struck through the address, and "Tremlett Towers, Derbyshire," substituted in a bold clerkly hand.

Now, it is three-and-twenty years since Her Majesty permitted the Baronet to take his wife's name; and although the firm of Coleman, Son, and Co. exists to this day, the last Coleman retired fourteen years ago. It was clear, therefore, that the writer of this strange epistle had not been in communication with Sir George during all this time; and if it had not been that one of the partners in the present firm remembered to have heard of the Baronet when he was serving his clerkship, and hunted his direction out of an old diary—it would probably never have reached its destination. There, however, it was, in the hands of the stately butler at Tremlett Towers, who, after careful examination of what had been scratched out, the seal, and the folding—which was effective, if not symmetrical—showed it to the second footman, and pronounced it to be "a rum 'un." The second footman, who was young in the service, scanned it in turn, and expected it was "a begging letter;" whereupon the butler, who knew a thing or two, laughed, and observed that "there aint much good in sending begging-letters to *him*"—meaning by "*him*" the Baronet, his master.

Lady Tremlett and her son made their appearance, gathered up their correspondence, and were seated at table, before Sir George came bustling in. As was his wont, he hummed a tune, and began to collect his letters mechanically—for their general purport was too well known to this man of title and position who has £150 a year independent of his wife, and he found little pleasure in their perusal. But when his eye fell on that dirty, blotted scrawl, he seized it, shuffled it under some other letters, got very red in the face, then very white, and cold all over, and finally managed to enfold the mysterious epistle in his handkerchief and thrust both deep into his pocket. When he sat down to breakfast he was more than usually cheerful, and anxious to know "the news" from his wife and son; but his appetite was not as good as usual this morning. The meal concluded, he hurried away to a back room where he kept his boots and fishing-tackle, and which he called his Study, and there, after having carefully locked the door and drawn down the window-blinds, he tore open the letter, and read it eagerly. "My God!" he exclaimed, "if I had been away, and she had opened it!" Then he rent it into a score of fragments, and threw them into the empty grate—for it was summer time—and as they fluttered and fell, a word or part of a word caught his eye; so he knelt down, swept them all together with trembling hand into a heap, and burnt them to ashes with a cigar light. If his nearest friend had seen the ghastly face that the Vesuvian lighted up, he could scarcely have recognized it! This done, he rose, wiped the perspiration from his forehead, then paced up and down the apartment moodily, and at last sank into his easy-chair, and, burying his face in his hands, moaned aloud.

Two hours afterwards he knocked at the door of My Lady's boudoir, humming a pleasant tune.

"Come in," said My Lady.

"How deliciously cool and comfortable we are this abominably hot weather," observed the Baronet, in a gay tone, snuffing at some choice flowers which decorated this charming sanctum.

"Did you come to tell me so, my love?" was the languid response.

My Lady was reclining, in white muslin, on a couch by the well-screened window.

"Why, no—not exactly, my dear," said her husband, fidgeting with some ornament on the table; "the fact is, that I have received letters this morning which make it necessary that I should go to London for a few days,—about our new railway," he added quickly.

"You know I have not the slightest wish to interfere with your movements," replied My Lady, slightly opening those lustrous blue eyes of hers which, in the mother of a lad of twenty-two, were still most beautiful,—“pray go to London, or anywhere you like.”

"Then you don't mind being left?"

"Oh dear no!"

"And—and—Ha, ha! I—the fact is, that I—am rather short of money just now (this state had been for some time chronic with Sir George), and if you *could* lend me ten pounds until—Yes, I know. Thank you very much, my love!"

These last observations were made in consequence of a lazy gesture made by My Lady towards her canterbury, directly her spouse mentioned the mystic word "money."

Sir George wheeled the canterbury to her side with a quickness which showed that the performance had been well rehearsed.

"Ha! and this little fellow is the key," he said, selecting one from a tiny bunch suspended to My Lady's watch-chain, which she handed him. "So it is. Shall I open the drawer? To be sure—this is it! And there they are! Two fives will be most convenient. Thank you, again." And he was about to pocket the money—to which his practised fingers had found their way thus aptly—without further ceremony, when his second son Mr. Tremlett entered the room, *without* knocking.

"I have just lent your father ten pounds, Francis," said My Lady; "be good enough to enter them in the accounts."

"In notes or gold, mother?"

"In notes."

"Be good enough to let me see those notes, Sir," demanded his son.

"Fives, my boy—fives. Two of them—it's all right."

"Yes, Francis, two fives,—your father is quite right," said My Lady.

"I beg your pardon," was the filial reply, "it is not all right. When I am entrusted with the keeping of accounts, I choose to keep them in the

most systematic and business-like manner. To enter the mere gross sum of a loan is not systematic or business-like, as I understand the terms. I require to take down the date and number of those notes, and therefore request that they may be shown to me for that purpose."

"Francis is quite correct," observed My Lady; "pray show them. Dear boy! his methodical habits are so nice."

The Baronet bit his lip as he handed the notes to this precise young gentleman. Borrowing is not pleasant work under the best circumstances; but when you have to go begging to your wife, with your son to note down the transaction "systematically," it must go greatly against the grain. Sir George Tremlett's necessity, however, was urgent,—and the night mail took him up to London.

It will have appeared, from the conversation which preceded his departure, that "poor delicate little Frank" had grown up a remarkably self-sufficient young gentleman. His course of education had been as follows: He had a private tutor at home till he was fifteen, and then was sent to a famous public school, at which the principle of making the elder boys responsible for the well-doing of their younger companions was carried out to a considerable length. Mark me, that I have nothing whatever to say against this principle. In theory, it is excellent; and in practice, I know that it has produced many estimable men. But truth compels me to add, that it has also afflicted us with some insufferable prigs, and I am afraid we must include Mr. Francis Tremlett in this category.

Being a determined plodder, and not without ability, he became head of the school, and held that high post for nearly eighteen months. During this period he considered that the temporal and spiritual welfare of some three hundred of his species was placed under his care, and that there was hope for no single one of them without his exertions. In this state of mind he proceeded to Oxford, accompanied by some half a dozen lads of a similar way of thinking, and there encountered some half a dozen more, all earnest disciples of the same school. They were all very steady, all very studious, all very High Church—and, withal, exceedingly egotistical and full of "responsibilities." They kept themselves by themselves, and would have nothing to say to persons with less elevated missions.

Now, a little coterie like this, into which fresh ideas are not allowed to enter, is apt to get as musty as a little room from which fresh air is excluded; and the well-intentioned exertions of these young gentlemen, guided by no other rules than those which their own want of experience furnished, only escaped being very impertinent when they became ridiculous. For example—There was, about this time, at Brazennose, a sinner known to his intimates as Jack Cutler—as handsome, dashing, and idle a dog as ever lounged on the banks of Isis. He was the youngest son of a physician at Derby with whom Mr. Francis Tremlett had a slight professional acquaintance, which seemed to him to impose a "responsibility." Upon

the strength of this, and as the delegate of his clique, he visited Jack in his rooms, without an introduction, and informed him that he was doing no good at the university; that the courses he was pursuing would bring nothing but discredit upon his college; that his father was by no means a rich man; and that in throwing away the opportunities afforded him he (Jack, the sinner) was behaving in a fraudulent and ungrateful manner. Home-truths, all these, which Jack well deserved to hear. They would have come with great force from his tutor, or from the Vice-Chancellor, but from the mouth of a cotemporary—nay, a junior—they were rather hard to put up with. Jack, however, was a very good-natured fellow. He heard his visitor out, and then told him to be good enough to mind his own business, or, as he *had* come, to take a weed and be cheerful.

Mr. Francis Tremlett indignantly declined so insulting a proposition, and his little set shook their wise heads solemnly over the depravity it evinced, and mourned the fate that threatened all fast men, and Jack Cutler in particular. But the worst of it all was, that Jack took to reading in his last two terms, and was bracketed in honours with his would-be mentor when they went in for their degree! It would have been less galling if the reprobate had taken a first class. Then there would have been no comparisons. But for him to be written down as equal with the studious Mr. F. Tremlett in the second; and for men to say that if he had begun to grind a week or two sooner he would have beaten that prig's head off—was gall and wormwood to the person thus indicated and his set.

Having left the university, Frank retired to his home; instructed the tenants how to manage their farms; called the grey-haired Rector of the neighbouring village of Durmstone roundly to account for the manner in which he conducted his schools; gave his father and other country magistrates lessons in the art of administering justice; and taught various persons old enough to be his grandmother how "to suck eggs" of all sorts and sizes. It will be easily understood, therefore, how it came to pass that he made himself personally offensive to almost everybody upon the estate, gentle or simple. But then, you see, he was the heir, and much had to be excused and put up with in a young fellow who would be so powerful in the days to come. He was quite as precise in his dress as he was in his manner and opinions. He inclined to coats of a grave and sober cut, wore old-fashioned neck-ties, complained about his digestion, and aped the country gentleman. His father was the younger man of the two in every respect but years. But then, you see, his father had no responsibilities, and so could turn down his collars, wear a shooting-coat in the morning, and drive the dog-cart into Durmstone when he could get leave to take out a horse. Mr. Francis descended not to such trifling. His set at Oxford were distinguished by their stiff-necks—stiffened by more than starched linen. His set at Oxford always wore long-skirted frock-coats, and left dog-carts to be driven by sinners of the Jack Cutler tribe. So, Mr. Francis Tremlett dressed like a Secretary of State at one-

and-twenty, and when he went abroad was driven in his brougham, with a footman to open the door, as becomed his dignity.

Poor, delicate, affectionate little Frank! Those who expect him to have grown up in the promise of his gentle childhood will be rather disappointed.

Now, how an author may be led astray! A few pages back I was crying out upon those who go skeleton-hunting in gentlemen's houses, and here I have unearthed two out of one covert in my fifth chapter! It only shows that things do not go on pleasantly in pleasant-looking places, as one sometimes supposes they do. There are many, I dare say, who quite envy Sir George Tremlett, and think that he has not a care in that fine house; and yet we know that he is dependent upon his wife and son for his daily bread, and that they take care he shall know it. I have to account for some of the consequences which sprung from this wretched and unnatural state of affairs, and so am bound to disclose it.

Arrived in London, Sir George Tremlett put up at an hotel near the station, and early the next morning hailed a Hansom cab and drove—not westwards, where the business he had indicated to his wife is transacted, but over London Bridge to the South-Eastern Railway terminus, and took a first-class return ticket for Poundbridge.

It was about four hours after he had arrived there that he met his son, face to face, in Westborough Lane, as already described.

CHAP. VI.

MR. BRANDRON KEEPS HIS APPOINTMENT.

SUPPOSING you had a son, and were so confident that he was serving with his regiment in India that you would stake your head against a sugar-plum upon the fact; or, supposing that you had a father, whom for the last four weeks you had been incessantly associating with a family circle in Derbyshire; and thus positive as to your respective whereabouts, you and this father, or you and this son, were suddenly to come face to face in a secluded Kentish lane, What would you say?—What would you do? Shut this book for a moment, try and realize the situation, and see what words will properly express the feelings of the actors. If you can find them, you are more fortunate than your author. Were he writing a melodrama now, there would be no difficulty. The stage directions would send father and son to opposite corners of the scene, where they would strike attitudes; and the father, clasping his hands to the right, would exclaim, "Ha!" and the son, clasping his hands to the left, would ejaculate, "Heavens!" Whereupon the father would shout, "Can it be? Yes, it is! No, it isn't! Ha! ha! ha! 'Tis he! my long-lost che-ild!" And then, with a stamp, a gurgle, and a rush, they would fall into each other's arms, to resume, as soon as the inevitable applause had ceased, the ordinary business of the play, as though nothing particular had occurred. It

is rather hard upon us story-tellers that we are not allowed to make use of fine old cut-and-dried conventionalities of this kind to help us over our difficulties. The truth is so very common-place! But the truth must be told; and in telling it I have an observation to make. It is not considered right, I believe, to cut down your neighbour's window-curtains, and to make up the material into a dressing-gown for your own wearing; but it is perfectly fair and proper, as things go, to steal your neighbour's novel, and turn it into a play for your own benefit. Should it occur to any of those gentlemen "connected with the Drama," who have been good enough so to convert certain of my literary goods, that this story is a good one to be "done" for the stage, they will have to find their own dialogue for this very striking situation; and I warn them, that if the actor who is to undertake the part of Sir George Tremlett should conduct himself towards the actor who is cast for Captain Frankland—and *vice versa*—after the manner in which those persons actually behaved to each other in the Westborough lane, those unfortunate performers will certainly be hissed off the stage; for so completely crushed by surprise were the senses of father and son, that they stood stock-still, staring vaguely in each other's faces, and said and did exactly—*nothing*.

During the short space in which Stephen could treat this *rencontre* as a good joke—before circumstances, yet to be related, made it the starting-point of a dreadful mystery—he used to confess, that his first impulse was to run away. "My heart," he said, "gave a great jump up into my throat—my blood ran boiling hot for a moment from head to heel, and then seemed to flow away from me altogether, leaving me weak and sick, with the hedge and the road waltzing together round me." As for Sir George, he uttered a cry, and fell in a faint where he stood. There was a little stream at hand, and Stephen got some water as soon as he had collected his senses, and, after considerable trouble, succeeded in restoring his father to consciousness. His first words, delivered in a tone of sorrow and reproach, were, "Oh, Steeve! have you followed me?"

Stephen assured him that there was no "following," except for the last few hundred yards; and explained as briefly as he could what had brought him to Westborough. The Baronet seemed to gain composure as the narrative proceeded; and by the time his son had accounted for his share in causing their meeting, he had quite recovered, and began to chatter with his usual vivacity.

"I never was so surprised in my life—never! And so you have been ill in India—dying—Bless me, why didn't you write? Dear, dear, dear! But you are not looking any the worse—only a little brown and thin—that's all. And what splendid weather for the harvest, eh?"

Stephen did not pay much attention to this last observation, or, indeed, to any of its predecessors. He was burning to know what had brought his father so far from home into that secluded spot, and he pressed his questions with perhaps more force than discretion.

"Why am I here?" replied the Baronet; "why, for a constitutional, of course. I cannot do without my constitutional, you know. I am as great a walker as ever, my boy—bless you!" he added, puffing out his chest and striking it, "I should never have been the man I am if I did not take my constitutional regularly."

"But you have not walked from Derbyshire this afternoon, surely?" said Stephen, smiling.

"Ha, ha, ha! What an idea! Very good—very good indeed! Walked from Derbyshire! Capital! No, no. I am staying at the Wells. I have been there—let me see—I have been there—I've been there since—the morning. Had business, you know. Finished it by luncheon-time, rattled through it quickly, as usual, and here I am, delighted to see you, my dear boy—delighted beyond measure, I assure you."

Stephen's brow darkened when he heard the word "business." "May I ask," he said, "if your appointment was with a gentleman from India, named Brandon?"

"Brandon—Brandon! Oh dear no—not Brandon. I came to see a particular friend; Mr.—er—Mr. ——— Dear me, how stupid to forget his name! Mr. ———."

"Never mind, as it was not the person I mentioned. I had a reason for asking, but it does not matter. What do you propose to do now?"

"Oh, anything—nothing! I'm my own master."

"Then I'll tell you what we'll do. I am staying for the present at the Rising Sun, at Westborough, with my friend Mr. Brandon. I had arranged to go to London with him this afternoon, but he had not returned when I came back from Kernden. He must have arrived by this time. Come with me—it's only a step from hence. If he is ready to start we can all three go on together. I should like to introduce you to him, for he saved my life. If he is not ready, I will go home straight with you."

"Excellent plan—excellent!" replied Sir George; "but"—(and he consulted his watch in a very fussy and hurried manner)—"I really have not a moment to lose. I must run away to the station at once, I expect a telegraphic message. I must catch the train, or I don't know what I shall do. I am late as it is. Very sorry to leave you so soon, but time and train, you know—Good gracious! I shall be late—Good bye, my dear boy! Come home as soon as possible. How delighted your mother will be, to be sure! Good bye!" And before Stephen could well master his astonishment at these strange contradictions, his father seized his hand, wrung it affectionately, and literally ran away from him.

His own master! Ready to do anything or nothing! Expecting a telegraphic despatch! Obligated to catch the train! What train? The express was half way to London by that time, and there was not another till eight o'clock. The more Stephen mused over his father's behaviour, the less was he able to make it out. He knew, however, that resolution was not amongst his parent's virtues, and that he was given to rushing

hither and thither, full of hurry and importance, to do nothing at all, and, consequently, was more amused than astonished by it.

In this frame of mind he reached the Rising Sun, and made straight for Brandon's room, fully expecting that he had returned and would there be found. The room was as he had left it—empty. No one had seen or heard anything of Mr. Brandon. It was now nearly seven o'clock, and he had promised to meet him at four. "Oh," thought Stephen, "it's perfectly clear he is dining at the Wells, and will not be in for a couple of hours yet;" and having thus made up his mind that his friend could not be expected, he went out into the road and watched for him anxiously.

Sir George Tremlett hurried away towards the Poundbridge Railway Station, as though he really thought he was going to catch a train, and arrived there very hot and tired with his rapid walk—not out of humour, though, as it seemed, with himself or anybody else, for he buzzed about the place like a great moth, and had something to chatter about with everybody. He had not been there twenty minutes before he had told the booking-clerk, the station-master, the newspaper-boy, the waitresses in the refreshment-room, the man in charge of the electric telegraph, three porters, the policeman, and half-a-dozen passengers in waiting for the down train, that the arrangements of the line were very inconvenient—very inconvenient, indeed. The idea, he said, of there not being a train till eight o'clock! He should have to spend another night in London, for it would be impossible to catch the Northern Mail. The carriage would be waiting for him at his station—dear, dear!—and one of the horses had a slight cold when he left. He really hoped that William had not forgotten to bring the horse-clothes with him. He was a good servant, William, but very careless sometimes—very careless; and the train would not be there for more than an hour! Dear, dear! He should certainly speak to his friend Mr. Borham Davy. Mr. Borham Davy had great railway influence. Did they—the booking-clerk, the station-master, the newspaper-boy, the waitresses in the refreshment-room, the man in charge of the electric telegraph, the three porters, the policeman, and the passengers waiting for the down train—know his friend, Mr. Borham Davy? No! Indeed! Well, he married one of the Flintdens—the Wiltshire Flintdens—a charming person; and he was a director of a great many lines. He (Sir George) was almost sure that he was a director of this. He should certainly speak to Mr. Borham Davy about making the trains more convenient.

Into the refreshment-room there soon came some of the boys from the school. With these he immediately entered into conversation—he had a fatal habit of committing himself with boys)—chaffed them about their trencher-caps; asked if the head master was a good hand at caning; felt assured that they did not come for plum-cake; and indulged in other such like twaddle, which we all remember to have despised when at school, but think it necessary to repeat to schoolboys in our wiser years. Then he stood cherry brandy all round, which somewhat modified the opinion

which the lads—lads are quick in such cases—had formed of the garulous gentleman, and then, struck apparently by a sudden thought, called for a sheet of paper and an envelope, and wrote a letter to Stephen Frankland. It ran as follows:—

“MY DEAREST BOY,

“I was so charmed and surprised to see you, that I quite forgot to mention that I am not expected at home for a few days. Pray do not arrive in my absence. Could you delay coming until Friday—or say Saturday? Saturday would suit us all admirably.

“Your affectionate father,

“GEORGE TREMLETT.”

“P.S.—If you write, you need not tell your mother that you met me here. I shall see her myself to-morrow. She might think it unkind of me to stay away after I had completed my London business—that is all, my dear boy. Bless you. “G. T.”

The person who is responsible for the authorship of the saying, “As easy as lying” could have had little experience in the practice he affected to consider so facile. Easy as lying! Why not as easy as playing the violin, or writing a dictionary, or standing upon your head on a tight rope, or discovering the source of the Nile? To lie consistently is, I take it, about as difficult a thing as a man can attempt. I only wish that a second De Quincey would arise and write us an “Essay upon Lying, considered as one of the Fine Arts;” we should know then what an important and abstruse science it is. We think it is easy, because we are so tolerant of the bungling efforts of fifth-rate practitioners. How some of us have been called over the coals for presuming to throw discredit upon accounts retailed to us from the very best authority! With what an air of reproach have we been asked if we think that Mrs. Grundy would tell a falsehood! Of course not, she has only given currency to a set of particulars which, when reason casts a stone into the midst of them, fall to—like the armed men which sprang of old from the dragon’s teeth—and knock each other about the head and ears till there is not so much residuum as was left of the Kilkenny cats, to be found of any of them. But it is vulgar, and sometimes dangerous, to throw stones; and so the dragon’s progeny march off with fixed bayonets, to stab reputations, to part old friends, and stand sentry at the doors of British Banks and such like shams, investing them with an appearance of stability and grandeur that may not be lightly aspersed. As easy as lying, forsooth! It is easy to hide a lighted candle from a blind man; but is it easy to hide a lighted candle?

I do not think that Sir George Tremlett told lies for the mere sake of lying, or to gain any profitable end. He was one of those shallow-pated people who cannot go straight from one point to another for the life of them, and who think it necessary to surround the commonest occurrences with a veil of mystery.

The man who first said that liars should have good memories was well up to his work. When Stephen's father told his son that big fib about not being expected home for a few days, he knew perfectly well he was going to return forthwith; but he had forgotten all about it by the time that the ink in which his signature was written had dried, and he scribbled that postscript in which he wrote himself down a fibber. Not expected home for a few days, and yet to see his wife, *who was at home*, to-morrow! Oh, Sir George! If Stephen had received such a contradictory epistle when he had leisure to think over its contradictions, they would have cost him no little trouble and annoyance. It came to hand, however, at a time when his mind was full of one dreadful subject, and it merely impressed upon him the wish that he was not to hurry home yet awhile. Had it urged his immediate presence at Tremlett Towers he could not have obeyed the call, and so no harm was done.

The eight o'clock train at last arrived, and Sir George found a vacant place in a first-class carriage, and speedily unburdened his mind to his fellow-passengers concerning the inconvenient arrangements of the line, and the long time he had to wait; and told them all about careless William, and the horse that had a cold, and the communication he was about to make to his friend, Mr. Borham Davy, who had so much interest in railways, and married one of the Flintdens of Wiltshire.

The chatter only ceased with the journey, and the chatterer then hailed a Hansom and drove westward ho! over London Bridge.

Towards London Bridge, twelve hours afterwards, journeyed two travellers, also from the county of Kent. One was a rough-looking fellow, in a faded velveteen shooting-jacket and fur cap, and the other a woman dressed in a common print gown. The man was travel-stained and dreary, and his companion dead beat. He dragged her almost from under the horses' feet, and as she stood scared and motionless on the kerbstone, said, not unkindly, "Come, come, Nancy lass! cheer up! this is London! only a little further and we shall be where we are going." Whereupon she reiterated vaguely the word "London, London," and added, "I live at the second cottage opposite the well, a mile and a bit from Westborough; please take me home." Poor, witless thing! it was a formula she had been taught to repeat by rote—like a parrot—in case she should ever wander away from her friends and lose herself.

Pardon the apparent brutality of the question, oh, respectable reader, but if ever you were to do anything for which you might be "wanted"—(you understand what I mean)—where would you fly to hide? Will you go to Paris in twelve hours, and remain there? Alas, there are such things as extradition treaties, and you are not safe from Policeman X on the Boulevards! Will you take ship for Australia? The voyage is a long one, and it would be unpleasant at the end of it to find a detective who had outstripped you in a fast steamer, waiting to take you back before you could land. Besides, it is so easy to watch the ships in the

river and the docks, and pounce upon the "wanted" one as he comes on board. I fancy all travelling must be dangerous to people who are "wanted." Every ship—every station, is a trap, and the railway train itself a prison, with those uncomfortable tale-telling wires running all along its course. Well, but, surely a man may walk away in the cool of the evening, and take up his quarters in some quiet country village where nobody knows him, and be in peace. Be in peace where nobody knows you? My dear sir, you'd be the gossip of the place in four-and-twenty hours. No! when I get into trouble, I will go where no one will notice me, or even see me to pay any attention to what I am, or look like, or do. I shall take a first floor in Regent Street, and dine every day at Simpson's, upon the principle that the wise ones of the earth are always seriously unconscious of what is going on directly under their noses. There were those who were at some trouble to find out where Jim Riley had gone with his idiotic sister. He certainly did not take lodgings in Regent Street, or dine every day at the Divan in the Strand; but he tramped on, and lost himself and Nancy amongst the busy, toiling, heaving, and rattling city, where men had enough to do to attend to their own business without troubling themselves with his.

Sir George Tremlett caught the night mail after all.

In the mean time, Stephen Frankland was watching and waiting at Westborough for his friend Mr. Brandron; and as he watched and waited, the words of the absent man, spoken in his cabin that night when they conversed for the first time, and his strange manner, came vividly back upon Stephen's memory. He could see again the flash which lit up Brandron's usually cold grey eye as he spoke those ominous words, "I go to do *an act of justice!*" an act, as he subsequently admitted, by which an old wrong would be punished and a long-standing injury repaired. When Stephen found that Brandron was not the name in which his preserver's passage had been taken, he remembered what had fallen from him respecting his secret departure from India. "No one," he had said, "is aware that I intended to take this voyage. Were my purpose known in certain quarters, perhaps it might have been defeated." Later on he had acknowledged that he looked forward with nervousness and apprehension to the coming interview—that it was to be with a man whom he could not trust, a man who had managed to silence him for two-and-twenty years, and who would not scruple to silence him for ever, if he could. Those were his very words! This dreaded interview had now taken place. Who was it with? and what had been the result?

Lost in such musing, Stephen Frankland sat under the great oak upon the Green, twisting his tawny moustache and puffing the inevitable cheroot, till the shadows of the approaching night darkened over the quiet village, and the night itself set in. The stars came out one by one, and the moon rose over the little wood that lay behind the church. Many a time, when a boy at Poundbridge School, have I cut "hocky sticks" in that little wood, and been chased out of it staggering under a load of

plunder by indignant "navvies,"—a name which the alumni on good Sir Thomas Judd's foundation apply to all aboriginal mankind of the lower orders, unconnected with the school. A pleasant, leafy covert it was; thick with young ash-trees, verdant with open moss-carpeted spaces spread here and there round some giant tree, where the shy rabbits would come out to bask in the sunshine, and, at the sound of a human foot, dart back and be lost to sight in the tangled furze of fern and harebells, couch-grass and foxglove, wild-briar, ivy, and woodbine, that divided them, like a tangled, flowery fringe, from the cool shade of the thicket. Stephen Frankland knew nothing of this wood, but, whilst wandering round the church, came upon it unawares. The moon was at the full, and a nightingale, perched on the topmost spray of a large elm, was filling the night with melody. He was, as we know, in a dreamy, musing frame of mind, so he lazily climbed the stile, and having sauntered into a secluded part of the wood till he came to what had been once used as a saw-pit, sat himself down upon a pile of timber close at hand, and listened to the nightingale long after the songster had flown away. Meditating about his illness, his journey, and his home, and trying to imagine what Brandron was doing at that moment, wherever he was; why should he have noticed in the uncertain light that the ground was cut up and trampled, as though by a struggle, and that the boards which covered up the old saw-pit had been recently moved? He could only have known by this kneeling down, and observing that the ends were not quite replaced on the spots where the grass, that had been hitherto covered by them, grew white and crushed. Had he looked close enough he would have seen some dark stains upon the herbage, and the print of a hand upon the rotting planks that was not there in the morning.

But he noticed nothing. His mind was not where he sat, but at Tremlett Towers—in the camp at Jansi—in his cabin on board the "Ganges,"—at Tremlett Towers again—and at "the Wells," wondering what Brandron could be doing there.

Afterwards he began to reason with himself about Brandron's disappearance. Disappearance? Absurd! The idea of any person "disappearing" in such a country as England, and no one hearing of him again! The thing was preposterous. Had we not police, and constabulary, and railways, and electric telegraphs, and coroners, and private inquiry offices, and habeas corpus, and all the rest of it? Of course we had! And any one of Her Majesty's subjects who flattered himself that he could hide away another, or conceal himself for any improper purpose from the eye of the law and the sure grasp of its myrmidons, would very soon find out his mistake.

So thought Stephen Frankland; and I know there are thousands who share his confidence in the omniscience and penetration of the powers that be. "Murder will out," says the proverb; and it is consolatory to know that if you are murdered some one is pretty sure to swing for it. I

believe that we are as quick and certain in the detection of criminals as any of our neighbours, and by no means join with those who, panic-stricken at some late failure of justice, cry out that crime is getting the upper-hand of the means for its detection. Still, I am by no means sure that all things are as safe and pleasant as we like to think them. Are all the missing people who are advertised about in the second column of the *Times* cheats, and runaways, and ne'er-do-wells? What is the meaning of those placards, with the ghastly heading "FOUND DEAD," which glare at us from the doors of police-stations and workhouses? The black river has cast up its dreadful burden, as though in horror, on the sedges, and gone shuddering on its course from the horrid spot. Are we quite sure that the grinning corpse, that grasps at nothing so vaguely with its distorted fingers, was clothed, when last it stood upright upon the earth, in those wretched dripping rags? Has it never happened that hale men and fair women, whose life was an annuity of love and hope to all around them, have left their pleasant homes for daily avocations, and never returned again? I think that we can reckon up, without much difficulty, a grim category of murders that have *not* come out, and—maybe—will not, to the judgment-day. Who killed Saville Kent? Who placed those bloody remains of mortality upon the coping-stones of Waterloo Bridge? and whose were they? Let us say that these and other similar mysteries are quite exceptional, and lay our heads upon our pillows with the comforting assurance that no other child that has been found dead in the morning came to a violent and murderous end—that no bones lie mouldering under the dark water, the stone flags of gloomy courts and cellars, or the gay green carpeting of quiet woods, unheard of and undiscovered. It is best not to think too much of such things, if we value our night's rest. Dead men tell no tales; but I think that if the history of the unknown dead ever comes to be written, it will fill many a ghastly volume. Stephen Frankland, musing in the moonlight, seated by that old saw-pit in Westborough wood, had no such uncomfortable doubts. He only thought that his old friend's conduct in staying away so long was rather strange, and that if he did not return that night he was sure to find him somewhere on the morrow. *Somewhere!*—certainly!

He was aroused from this reverie by the striking of the church clock, and left the spot by the path along which he had come; but paused on the stile to take a last look into the wood.

Nothing was stirring, but the night air amidst the highest branches of the trees. There was no sound but the faint flutter of the leaves. It was almost as light as day, and the moonbeams fell full on the old moss-grown saw-pit. They fell that night upon many another spot as silent, and, to all outward sign, as peaceful. They fell upon green mounds in village churchyards and upon fields and moorland on which great battles had been fought in times gone by, where the bones of victor and of vanquished crumbled to dust together under the sod. They fell on the calm and

glittering ocean, and danced on the unmarked grave of many a gallant mariner. They flitted between the chinks of the closed shutters which had kept the daylight from mocking the slumbers of the honoured dead. They flashed upon the dismal charnel-houses of the great city—lit up with a fitful gleam the caves in which hermits had sighed away their useless lives, and glimmered on the horrid holes, the deep morass and sluggish pool, where red-handed murder hides its dead from sight. They lit up the old saw-pit, and Stephen Frankland hurried away towards the inn to seek his friend once more.

He was not there! He had not yet come! There were no tidings of him. Ten o'clock! Midnight! One! Two! chimed forth—and still no footstep, no sound—no tidings. No sleep fell on Frankland's eyes that night. In the morning he was at "The Wells" before the hotels had fairly opened, describing the person of Brandron, and inquiring if he had been seen there. All was in vain. By noon he had thoroughly exhausted the town, even to its humblest tavern—and no result. Once, indeed, he hoped that he had obtained a clue. The head-waiter at "The Kentish" distinctly recognized the gentleman; he had come in with another party yesterday afternoon, and had dined and slept in the hotel. Was he not a tall party in black? Yes! Well, then, he had had two sodas and brandy, and had gone off to the High Rocks about an hour ago. Stephen drove off to the High Rocks as fast as a hack-fly could carry him, and found a lanky hobbledy-hoy dressed in mourning, smoking a huge cigar, which seemed to be disagreeing with him, and who acknowledged to staying at "The Kentish," and having had two sodas and brandy for breakfast. Stephen, therefore, had his drive for his pains. Thus occupied, the prevailing impression amongst the natives seemed to be that he was a detective officer from London, and that the object of his search had committed a murder, or was a clerk in some public company who had been driving mail-phaetons and giving dinner parties in the Regent's Park upon £150 a-year. Popular feeling, therefore, was certainly not in his favour. Is the mistrust that we English have of police, and our hatred of anything like spying—though exerted for the detection of crime—a good or a bad sign? The virtue of our mobs is of the most Spartan character. They can hardly be prevented sometimes from tearing a prisoner to pieces, even whilst by that pleasant fiction of our law he has a right to be considered an innocent man. But, let a constable lay a hand upon him roughly, and the attention of the many-headed monster will be turned immediately from the culprit to his captor, and a perfectly harmless official be overwhelmed with execration for doing, perhaps, a necessary act!

Stephen Frankland rode back slowly, and with a heavy heart. He had made up his mind to one of two things: Either Brandron had met with some foul play at the hands of the person with whom he had left Westborough in the morning; or he had given him, Frankland, the slip, for some purpose that he found it impossible to divine. By no other cause

could his prolonged absence be accounted for. Disappointed, and weary in body and mind, he tramped on till he came to a bend in the road from which a little inn was in sight, and was surprised to see a crowd round the door. A conviction that it had something to do with the disappearance of Brandron flashed across his mind, and he quickened his steps. As he approached, and some of the assembly recognized him, there arose a shout, and then a murmur of "Here he is! here he is!" And the people, dividing right and left, made him a clear passage to the door. This was kept by a couple of the county police; and close at hand stood a well-appointed gig, the horse of which was in a perfect lather of foam. The inn itself was in a state of wild confusion. In the passage stood the landlady, wringing her hands and weeping bitterly, surrounded by half-a-dozen village gossips, who did their best to get in everybody's way—each one telling the other to do what he ought to have done himself.

"In God's name, what has happened?" cried Stephen, rushing into the passage.

The constable in charge recognized the voice and manner of command, and touching his hat to the young soldier, replied—

"The gentleman who was missing, Sir, has been found."

Found! Not returned—not brought back; but—FOUND!

There was a dark, fatal, passive sound in the word that made Stephen's blood run cold. Mr. Brandron had left that village, full of health and vigour, was missing—and had been *found*!

He entered the inn, and in a moment the poor homely landlady blurted out the fatal truth.

"Oh Sir!" she cried, "oh Sir!—the poor gentleman—the poor, kind gentleman that nursed my little Teddy! oh Sir, they've robbed and murdered him!"

"Murder I am afraid it will be," said a grave-looking gentleman who at that moment descended the stairs, "as his case is, I fear, quite hopeless; but robbery has not been the motive for the crime. He has a gold watch in his pocket, and his purse with money in it has not been abstracted. No common robber has done this." Then, turning to Stephen, who stood almost paralyzed with horror and surprise, he added, "I presume you are the person spoken of as this gentleman's friend; if so, I should like to have a word with you in private."

"Tell me one thing at once, and quickly," said Stephen; "Where did this happen—where was he found?"

"In an old saw-pit in Westborough wood," was the reply. "He must have lain there insensible all last night and the greater part of yesterday."

METRICAL PSALMODY: TATE AND BRADY.

JOHNSON, in his "Life of Waller," observes, that "Contemplative piety, or the intercourse between God and the human soul, cannot be poetical." And again, "Of sentiments purely religious, it will be found that the most simple expression is the most sublime. Poetry loses its lustre and its power when it is applied to the decoration of something more excellent than itself. All that pious verse can do is to help the memory and delight the ear; and for these purposes it may be very useful, but it supplies nothing to the mind." This is no doubt true, in general: some of the works of Addison, Cowper, and Heber may be quoted as exceptions; but Johnson is undoubtedly right in his estimate of, and reasons for, the difficulties which present themselves to the would-be poets of contemplative religion.

The language of intercourse between God and man should be the most sublime, and yet the most simple—the images taken from nature and every-day life. All superfluous adjectives should be dispensed with, and the beauty of the Hebrew and force of the Anglo-Saxon combined.

The versification of the Psalms of David has always presented, and still presents, a field of ample labour for the poet. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that many of our best poets have attempted the task; nor, if Johnson's view be correct, can we be surprised to find that the language contains no versified edition of the Psalms that can be considered a credit to our native tongue—none that will bear comparison with the authorized prose translation.

It may not be inopportune, in a popular Magazine, to say a few words concerning the History of Psalmody since the introduction of Christianity. The singing of psalms and hymns seems to have been the practice of the Christian Church from the earliest times to the present day. We read, that, after the Last Supper, Christ and His disciples sang an hymn—(or psalm, in the marginal note). St. Paul exhorts the Ephesians to sing psalms and spiritual songs. We have reason to believe, that, in all the early Christian Churches, the singing of psalms formed a part of the regular service. Among the inferior clergy of the Church of Rome were the Psalmistræ, an order instituted about the commencement of the third century to regulate and encourage the use of the ancient psalmody. By degrees, however, the greater portion of this element of the Church service was surrendered to a single voice, the congregation only joining at the end. This led to a more scientific, and perhaps more refined, mode of singing, entirely confided to professed musicians: the motive was, undoubtedly, to increase the authority of the Romish priest, by still further separating the laity from the clergy. John Huss, and afterwards Luther and Calvin, restored to the people their share in the services of the Church. The singing of the Psalms by the whole congregation soon became a distinguishing feature of the reformed faith. Luther introduced harmony, or

singing in parts, into the service: the sterner disciplinarian, Calvin, refused to admit anything but simple melody. It now became necessary to versify the Psalms, and set them to suitable tunes. The general want was soon supplied: the French version of Clement Marot still graces the language in which it was written—it added much to the fame of the poet, who introduced the Madrigal, and is one of the sweetest poets of France. He had spent a life of folly, and having sung the praises of the "*petit dieu*," sought how to make amends by devoting his remaining energies to the service of the Great God, and changing the character of the songs of France. About the year 1540 he published the first thirty: they were dedicated to the King. These were well received at Court, and by the Sorbonne (for the time); and, set to the ballad tunes of France, were heard in every palace and every cottage. The Sorbonne withdrew its smile, and, threatened by the priestly power, Marot fled to Geneva, where, having translated twenty more of the Psalms, the fifty were published, with a Preface by John Calvin, in 1547. Marot dying in the following year, Theodore Beza, his friend, undertook, and carried out creditably, the task of completing the work. In 1553 the first complete versified translation of the Psalms appeared in the French language, bound in the same volume with the Genevan Liturgy and the Catechism of Calvin. The Sorbonne frowned. Their use and publication were at once and strictly prohibited in France. The singing of a Psalm was reckoned a proof of heresy, and Psalmist was deemed but another name for Reformer. The introduction of metrical psalmody into England is due to French Protestantism.

Some two hundred persons have attempted at various times to turn the Psalms into English verse—Sir Thomas Wyatt* and the Earl of Surrey among the earliest; no regular version for Church service was, however, attempted before that of Sternhold. He was Groom of the Robes to Henry VIII., and afterwards to his son, Edward VI., holding a somewhat similar office to that of Marot. He had a good reputation about the Court for piety and poetry, which latter was so much admired by his first great master, that he left him in his will a hundred marks. Thomas Sternhold's thirty-seven Psalms were published, with a dedication to the King, in 1549. The poet did not live to enjoy the praises with which his work was received, having died a few months before it appeared. The work was carried on by John Hopkins, a clergyman and schoolmaster in Suffolk, who contributed forty-eight to the version—the remainder were versified by William Whyttingham, Robert Wisdome, and one or two others. The entire version was published in English in 1562, and was added to the Book of Common Prayer, though it is doubtful upon what authority, under the title, "The Whole Booke of Psalms collected into English Metre, by T. Sternhold, J. Hopkins, and others, conferred with the Ebrue, with apt Notes to sing them withall." The version was bad—it was undertaken,

* This version is entirely lost.

not from a conscious competency, or with a view to fame, but simply as a pious exercise. Its authors, like Marot, endeavoured to change the character of the songs of their country, and to substitute the Psalms of David for the vicious ballads of the time. The 18th is generally considered the best psalm in the book,—it is by Sternhold: it begins—

“The Lord descended from above,
And bow’d the heavens high;
And underneath his feet Hee cast
The darkness of the sky.

“On cherubs and on cherubims,
Full royally he rode:
And on the wings of all the winds
Came flying all abroad.”

It may be remarked, that, with an exception or two, Sternhold’s verses were only made to rhyme in the second and fourth lines, and sometimes there is no rhyme at all.

The edition is deeply marred by extreme views of Puritanism—the disrobing of the beautiful—the lowering of the sublime.

Warton says, “It is entirely destitute of elegance, spirit, and propriety;” and Campbell, in his “Essay on English Poetry,” speaking of the Puritan effect of the Reformation on our national muse, says, “Then flourished Sternhold and Hopkins, who, with the best intentions and the worst taste, degraded the spirit of Hebrew Psalmody by flat and homely phraseology: and mistaking vulgarity for simplicity, turned into bathos what they found sublime.”

Whatever may be said of the merit of the Old Version, it is impossible to deny the fact of its early popularity. Our language in those days was not as suitable for verse as it is in the present, and it was only real genius and skill that could make the poetry of that day readable now. No opportunity seems to have been lost of altering in order to improve the work; Hopkins began by revising Sternhold, and succeeding editors have practised their art upon both, till, as Hearne the antiquary remarked, that in his day, if Sternhold and Hopkins were “living, they would be so far from owning what is ascribed to them, that they would proceed against the innovators as cheats.”

The favour with which the work was received, may, however, in some measure be accounted for, if we compare it with the wretched stuff, called “A Metrical Version of the Acts of the Apostles,” by Christopher Tye, which appeared shortly after.

Nothing, however, can excuse some of the similes and expressions to be found in the Old Version. Besides the repeated use of slang expressions, “there goes the game,” &c., we read of God exhorted to take his hand out of his *lappe* and give his enemies a *rappe*: we find the covenant between Jehovah and His people called a trade—God is called a “God of trade.” Having read, in the prose, the noble and simple simile in which

the rising of the Sun is compared to the Jewish custom of the bridegroom going forth from his chamber at midnight to meet his bride, we turn to read it in verse,—the eye catches the word “ready-trimm’d” (that is, newly-shaven) bridegroom: the beauty and feeling are all destroyed, and we shut the book in disgust.

This article bears at its head the names of the authors of the New Version, called so in order to distinguish it from that of Sternhold and Hopkins. The lives of Mr. Tate and Dr. Brady do not furnish over ample materials for the pen of the biographer. If their fame is not really great, there are at least few people whose eyes have not often rested on their names; and their work, bound up with the Book of Common Prayer, has, during the last hundred years, attained in this country a greater circulation than any other book, the Bible only excepted. It may not, therefore, be uninteresting briefly to answer the question which many must have asked, without perhaps the ready means to furnish a reply, “Who were Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady?”

They were both Irishmen—the sons of Irishmen. Nahum Tate was born in Dublin, in 1652. The particulars of his life are very scanty; he adopted no profession, but seems to have lived on his patrons. One of these, Lord Dorset, obtained for him, at Shadwell’s death, in 1690, the post of Poet Laureate. Besides miscellaneous Poems, Tate was the author of nine Plays, one of which, an adaptation of Shakespeare’s “King Lear,” was very popular, and held the Stage for several years. These are all, however, forgotten, and his reputation has to rest upon a somewhat unsubstantial foundation—his share in the versification of the Psalms of David. He was ever in debt, and died in the precincts of the Royal Mint,* whither he had taken sanctuary to avoid his creditors.

The name of Dr. Nicholas Brady claims a larger share of respect at our hands. His father was an officer in the King’s army, whom he served in the rebellion of 1641. Nicholas, born at Bandon on the 28th of October, 1659, was sent to Westminster School at twelve years old, where he was chosen King’s Scholar, and whence he was afterwards elected a Student of Christ Church. After remaining at Oxford four years he removed to Dublin, where his father resided, and from whose University he obtained successively the degrees of B.A., M.A., and D.D. Soon after his ordination he was appointed a Prebend of Cork, and obtained other Irish preferment. In 1690, troubles having broken out in Ireland, Dr. Brady thrice, by his intervention with the Royalist General Mac Carthy, saved his native town, Bandon, from destruction—the King having thrice ordered it to be razed to the ground. The same year he was deputed by the people of Bandon to go over to England to petition Parliament for a redress of Irish grievances, which in those days were more than imaginary. He settled in England, and during the whole of

* The privileges attached to the Mint were abolished a few years after.

his life was held in the highest esteem, as a man and as a minister. The custom of an Annual Ode and an Annual Sermon on St. Cecilia's Day had not yet grown into disuetude. In 1692 Dr. Brady wrote the successful ode: it was beautifully set to music by Henry Purcell, and twice performed with universal applause. Its author had also the honour, a few years after, of preaching the Annual Sermon on Sacred Poetry in St. Bride's Church: it was afterwards printed under the title of "Christian Music Vindicated." He became a noted preacher in London, and was chosen by the parishioners Minister of St. Catherine Cree, and Lecturer at St. Michael's, Wood-street. He afterwards became Rector of Richmond, where he kept a first-class school and performed the work of versifying; and was finally presented to the wealthy living of Clapham. He also had for some time the spiritual charge of Stratford-upon-Avon. He filled the distinguished post of Chaplain successively to the Duke of Ormond, William and Mary, and Queen Anne. Dr. Brady died, in London, on the 20th of May, 1726, in his 67th year, beloved and respected by all who knew him. We prefer to remember him as the saviour of his native town, and the faithful and ardent minister of religion—but his sermons and patriotism are forgotten, and he is only known in this nineteenth century as the author, in conjunction with Mr. Tate, of the New Version of the Psalms. The first portion of this work, entitled, "An Essay of a New Version of the Psalms of David," consisting of the first twenty by N. Brady and N. Tate, was published in London in 1693: it was followed in 1698 by the New Version complete, fitted to the tunes used in churches, and the "Supplement" of Church Hymns appeared in 1700.

I read, some little time ago, in a public print, the observation, "How Tate and Brady ever survived the task of translating, in perfect good faith and with the best intentions, the most sublime and divine of all poems into the utterly bald and contemptible doggerel which is unfortunately bound up with most of our Prayer-books, is a standing mystery." I can only wonder how the Church of England has, for a century and a half, put up with it. It is not, however, likely that it will survive another fifty years, with the present tendency to substitute hymns, and the immense number of hymn and psalm books that are published. It is open to any possessor of a Prayer-book to judge of the version for himself; I shall not, therefore, presume to point out particular passages, nor shall I attempt to say whether the New or the Old is the better. Southey and Kirke White differed upon this point; but all will admit that both are very bad, and, side by side, form a painful contrast to the strong and beautiful language of our Liturgy. The best way, perhaps, to form an opinion is to compare them with the prose translation.

Of the hundred-and-fifty psalms in the New Version there are certainly two of high merit, deserving to be placed with the best religious verses in the language: they are, the 34th and the 139th. The former has found

its way into, we believe, every hymn-book of all Christian denominations. It begins:—

“Through all the changing scenes of life,
In trouble and in joy,
The praises of my God shall still
My heart and tongue employ.”

Milton versified some of the Psalms, but they have not added to his fame; their chief merit is that they are very literal.

Since the appearance of the New Version, many attempts have been made to supersede it. Among those who have since rendered the whole or parts of the book are—Sir John Denham, Isaac Watts, S. Wesley, Addison, Chr. Pitt, Sir R. Blackmore, Merrick, Chr. Smart, James Maxwell, Toplady, Mickle, C. Wesley, Dr. Cotton, James Montgomery, Richard Cumberland, Dr. Mant, the second Lord Thurlow, Dr. Scott, Dr. Eden, and John Keble. Of these, the versions of Montgomery and Mickle, though incomplete, are perhaps the best. I give the last two verses of the 68th Psalm as rendered by the latter, as a specimen:—

“Yet to Thy saints, oh, God of Prayer,
How mild Thy mercies shine!
The tenderest father’s ardent care
But ill resembles thine.

“Thy mercies far, oh, far above
Thy other wonders shine;
A mother’s watchful love
But ill resembles thine.”

I add a short extract from the 72nd Psalm, by Montgomery:—

“O’er every foe victorious,
He, on His throne, shall rest,
From age to age more glorious,
All-blessing and all-blest.

“The tide of time shall never
His covenant remove;
His name shall stand for ever:
That name to us is—Love.”

An edition of the Psalms by Dr. Isaac Watts appeared in 1719. They are not literally, but interpretively, translated; or, in other words, they are imitated in the language of the New Testament. As he said, he wished rather to express himself as he thought David would have done, had he lived in days of Christianity. James Montgomery, the greatest panegyrist of his hymns, says that Dr. Watts’s faults are “principally prosaic phraseology, rhymes worse than none—and none where good ones are absolutely wanted to raise the verse upon its feet, and make it go, according to the saying, on all fours; though, to do the Doctor justice, the metre is generally free and natural when his lines want every other qualification of poetry.” It must be borne in mind, that the task which the early versifiers set themselves was a much more difficult one than that carried out by this eminent non-conformist.

Addison was of a religious turn of mind: he had been intended for the Church, but owing either to that natural diffidence which never forsook him, or to the counsels of his political friends, he never took Holy Orders. It was immediately on his retirement from the post of Secretary of State that he attempted the work of Psalm versification. It is said to have been his intention to give the world a work by a churchman that would have borne favourable comparison with the paraphrases of Dr. Watts. The author's natural modesty, and the absence of that poetic fire which cannot bear to translate unaltered the thoughts of another's mind, would have given us a genuine *version*, in the language and style of our Augustan age. The great Essayist died in June, 1719, leaving but four Psalms, which are not even complete, as specimens of what he intended: of these the 19th is, if not the best, at least the most popular. It begins—

"The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.
The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display,
And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.

"Soon as the evening shades prevail
The moon takes up the wondrous tale,
And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth:
While all the stars that round her burn,
And all the planets in their turn,
Confirm the tidings as they roll,
And spread the truth from pole to pole!"

Two other versions, those of Charles Wesley, the brother of the founder of the Wesleyan Methodists, and of John Keble, the author of a charming little volume entitled "The Christian Year," and late Professor of Poetry at Oxford, claim a short notice.

What a contrast these two volumes present: the reader will see this at once when we remind him, that Mr. Keble was one of the leaders in the recent attempt to introduce into the Church of England, and revive, certain practices, obsolete opinions and ceremonials akin to Romanism, called, after the chief of this new school, the learned Professor of Hebrew—Puseyism.

Charles Wesley deserves, perhaps, the first place among English Hymnologists. But his Psalms are greatly inferior to his Hymns; they were published during his lifetime in the "Methodist Magazine," and, containing no special feature of merit, can scarcely be said to have added to his reputation as "the Poet of the Christian heart."

Mr. Keble's version, which is very generally used by the High Church, is perhaps too literal: the slightest deviation in the direction of evangelical paraphrase has been studiously avoided; hence the metrical execution of

the work, though it evidences the mind and feeling of a scholar, is far from successful. In almost every Psalm we encounter instances of constraint and harshness in sound and expression, and these faults unfortunately mar our enjoyment of beauties which it would be impossible not to recognize, and unjust not to admit.

I may add that poetesses, as well as poets, have endeavoured to render the Psalms. One of the last complete versions was published at Hull, in 1837; it is the produce of the joint labours of two ladies, Miss Catherine Foster and Miss Elizabeth Colling. Propriety and fluency of diction characterise the volume; and each Psalm, if not redolent of its Hebrew extraction, is a model of good taste and skilful versification. We venture to extract two verses—

“ Let the floods clap their hands, and the earth raise her voice,
Let the isles of the ocean for gladness rejoice:
’Tis the Lord reigns on high in dominion alone,
And judgment and righteousness compass his throne.
“ ’Tis the Lord shall look forth from the veil that enshrouds
His glory with tempest, thick darkness and clouds:
He shall hurl the red bolt from his terrible hand,
And wither the wicked that poison the land.”

Before concluding this paper, I would observe that we have no uniform Book of Psalms and Hymns. It is not obligatory on the Church of England to sing from Tate and Brady; thus, almost every church you enter has a psalter and hymn-book of its own. No one will doubt that the authorized version of the Bible, the Liturgy, even the Psalms of Marot and Wesley’s Hymns, have exercised an important and beneficial influence upon the national mind. Why not, then, have a Church of England Book of Psalms and Hymns? There are an hundred hymns in the language—pure and strong in diction as in Christianity—*impressive, but not rhetorical*. There are an hundred good and simple hymn and psalm tunes. Let their words be fitted to these—every English child would learn them, and every English man and woman would sing them every Sunday in our churches. It is for Convocation to see to this: let us gather the few and rare gems of sacred poetry which our language contains. Our Bishops will be careful to reject all false doctrine, false images, and rhetoric. We will not sing of a “fountain filled with blood,” or be troubled with the false idea (however beautiful the poem in itself) of a dying Christian speaking to his soul in the words, “Vital spark,” &c. &c.

The rhythm would aid the memory; the subject would inform the mind upon holy matters. Such a book universally used in our churches would tend to promote unity—so much needed at present—and to further popular education. Would not such a system promote true religion, and beneficially affect the national mind?

EXTRAORDINARY INSTINCTS OF CERTAIN FISHES IN THE TROPICS.

OF all animate creatures, fishes are those whose characteristics have from time immemorial been assumed to be the most fixed and unchanging. So identified are they with the element they inhabit, that the figure of a "fish out of water" has been accepted in every age as the most emphatic emblem of all that is abnormal and uncomfortable. In classical, not less than in vernacular parlance, their unvarying habits have given origin to proverbs that embody the pith and force of immutable uniformity; but modern discovery has given a rude shake to the very basis that sustained these compact records of the wisdom of our ancestors. Virgil, in stately verse, drew the trope of improbability from the existence of fishes after the subsidence of their native waters. Horace painted the impossible, by imagining them gliding among the branches of trees—

"When fishes struggled midst the boughs
Where late the wood-dove built her nest."

And Juvenal, in the climax of incredulity, suggested the astonishment of the rustic who should turn out a living fish under the ploughshare :—

"Miranti, sub aratro,
Piscibus inventis!"

But, strange to say, we have lived to see the reality of all these miraculous contradictions not only surmised, but demonstrated. We have actual and incontrovertible evidence, that conditions exist under which fishes survive for months after the waters they have dwelt in have disappeared and been replaced by sun-baked clay.

Preparatory to such periods of compulsory æstivation, fishes have been seen in droves traversing fields and plains, toiling along dusty roads, in quest of running brooks; and when the weary search had failed, they have been dug out, alive, after long intervals of self-interment, from the floors of the dried-up ponds, and jumped in floundering surprise when flung out by the spade upon the bank. Nay, more, fish in such extremities have been seen to realize the paradox of Horace—not climbing to the summits of the elms, as he playfully painted them,

"Piscium et summa genus hæsit ulmo,"

but ascending palm-trees, in order to taste the lingering moisture that might still remain at the insertion of the branches in the trunk.

Although these are all matters of modern discovery, yet the truth of even the most startling of them was not unknown to some of the ancients. The wonders of the deep, which we are about to advert to, were unsuspected by the early naturalists of Europe. The first intelligence regarding them was brought from the far East by the followers of

Alexander the Great who shared with him the perils of his marvellous Indian expedition; but, like many other truths, they were scorned by the multitude as mere travellers' delusions. Some of the Greeks, it is true, with lively and imaginative faith, recorded them, but hesitated to pronounce upon their reality,—while the Romans, with a rude and sturdy wit, directed lumbering sarcasms against those who were so weakly credulous as to believe in them.

This is the less to be wondered at when we bear in mind the very opposite characteristics of the Greeks and of the Romans respectively in regard to the cultivation of natural science; for it affords a striking illustration of the diversity of the genius of the two nations in this particular that the latter, with all their world-wide opportunities of observation, added little or nothing to the knowledge previously acquired by the former in connection with the marvels of nature and natural history. The conquests of Rome carried her armies to the utmost confines of the known universe; and from these remote regions it was their custom to supply the circus and the amphitheatre with specimens of the rare and extraordinary animals which they discovered there; but, even from these living examples, they derived little to be added to intelligence amassed centuries before by Aristotle and Theophrastus, who themselves had seen few, if any, of the animals they described, but collected their facts from a careful collation and analysis of the narratives of their more adventurous fellow-countrymen who had travelled into far countries. Seneca was the first and almost the only example of a Roman who, in the spirit of a philosopher, applied his mind to develop the mysteries of nature, and his treatise on these topics still maintains its pre-eminence above the dim theories of Lucretius and the compilations of Pliny. But even Seneca, in the great work alluded to, his *Questiones Naturales*, has shown hesitation to accept, coupled with reluctance to contest, the fact, recorded by Livy and repeated by Mela, that living fishes had been turned up from under the surface of the earth in Narbon Gaul;—and he tries to elude the difficulty of either accepting or rejecting the story, by interposing a witticism to the effect, that, if it be true, we must “*go fishing hereafter with a mattock instead of a hook.*”

Time, however, the great assayer of pretensions, has at last pronounced in favour of the truth of these narratives; and the assumed fictions of the primitive explorers of India have taken their place amongst the accepted realities of science. Recent travellers have furnished evidence that, so far from the life of “a fish out of water” being unendurable, there are tribes that spend half their time upon the rocks.* Some that wander over and

* The *Salarias alticus*, which possesses the faculty of darting along the surface of the water and running up the wet stones with the utmost ease and rapidity. By aid of the pectoral and ventral fins and gill-cases these fishes move across the damp sand, ascend the roots of the mangroves, and climb up the smooth face of the rocks in search of flies, adhering so securely as not to be detached by repeated assaults of the waves.

for "change of water," just as tourists at home fly abroad for "change of air;" and others that bury themselves in the earth, when the ponds become dry, to await the return of the rains.

The principal of the facts we allude to will be found in the works recently published by Sir J. Emerson Tennent, descriptive of the island of Ceylon, and the habits and instincts of the animals that inhabit it.* The portions we are about to notice form but a single chapter of that author; but they are sufficiently surprising to warrant and merit separate and special attention. We are anxious, however, to preface them by a narrative of a very recent occurrence in Ceylon, more marvellous, if possible, than anything recorded by Sir J. Emerson Tennent, but too recent to permit of its being included in any of his works. The evidence, however, rests on such unimpeachable authority, that there is no reason whatsoever to question its truth.

We are charmed with the poetic episode of Arion carried by a dolphin, and familiar with the scenic spectacle of the triumphal chariot of Neptune drawn by sea-horses and tritons; but there is nothing in the pomp of the Ocean King, or the adventure of the Lesbian citharist, to surpass the startling incident of a ship with two hundred persons on board her being harnessed to a whale, and drawn majestically by moonlight for a distance of more than fifty miles. Yet, wonderful as the story is, it is indisputably true, and has happened within the last few months. The occurrence took place as follows.

Ceylon, from peculiar circumstances, is mainly dependent for manual labour upon the periodical influx of emigrant coolies from the opposite coast of India; and such is the importance of directing and encouraging these arrivals, that the Colonial Government have organized a Department of "Immigration Commissioners," to whom is entrusted the management of the line of vessels in which the Indian labourers are conveyed to Ceylon across the Gulf of Mannaar. It was during the voyage, in September last, of one of these passenger ships, that the event occurred which is described in the following official Report to the Commissioners from the officer in charge of a vessel called the "ABDUL RAHMAN."

"Talemanaar, 23rd September, 1861.

"GENTLEMEN,—

"I have the honour to inform you I left Devipatam on the 20th inst. with the two schooners, having on board 240 coolies; we arrived here on Saturday, the 21st, at four, p.m.

"Having the wind directly against us on coming opposite to Ramisseram pagoda, we anchored there at six o'clock, p.m., intending to start for Talemanaar during the night, when the wind would change. About eight

* CEYLON: *An Account of the Island, Physical, Historical and Topographical*: by SIR J. EMERSON TENNENT; 5th Edition: 1860. And *Sketches of the Natural History of Ceylon*: 1861.

o'clock, p.m., I was sitting on the poop, talking to two conductors about getting coolies, when suddenly the bow of the vessel was instantly pulled on the level with the sea; then came a slight shock, and a shower of spray all over the vessel; after which we shot off at railway speed. I was very much alarmed at first by the shock and spray, thinking we had drifted on some of the coral-reefs, and might go down. In about one minute, a large whale, some forty or fifty feet long, made his appearance forward, at a cable's length from the vessel. Then for the first time I knew how matters were. Very extraordinary indeed—the whale had swallowed our anchor, and was firmly hooked. At the time the whale hooked himself we were in six fathoms. The evening was very calm, and the moon just appearing above the horizon. The coolies were very much alarmed; and, indeed, so were we all. I was going twice to cut away the anchor and cables, but having only another cable on board, I did not like to do so, as, if I had, I should have had to stop the vessel, as I would not risk her in this weather depending on one cable.

"I think the way the whale got entangled must have been when he was feeding, running with his mouth fully extended, when, coming with his under-jaw against the fluke of the anchor, he seized it up, and having turned it in his mouth, was unable to extricate himself. I do not otherwise see how it could have occurred. The cable got hooked at eight o'clock, p.m.; the whale then went off at full speed a-head; he then stopped, and whirled us about rapidly; then went on forward again at fully fifteen miles an hour, whirling us and pulling us about right and left, and showing himself and spouting every minute; and this continued until one o'clock, a.m. From his size I do not think he could have been a grampus, as I feel certain he must have been forty feet in length. He took us N. by N.E. over fifty miles; and at one o'clock, a.m., on Saturday morning, the vessel stopped running, when the whale lifted his head out of the water about ten feet, and went off, leaving the anchor drifting. He was hooked five hours, and was nearly dead when the anchor got loose. We then turned the vessel, set sails, and stood in for Paumben Light, which we made by daylight, and continued under sail until we arrived at Talemanaar.

"I would not trouble you with this long communication; but never having heard of such a serious occurrence, I thought it might be useful and interesting to inform you of it.

"We require one or two new cables at once for the *Abdul Rahman*; the ones we have are not to be depended on—they have been seriously damaged by the continued twisting of the whale. I would feel very thankful to have the cable despatched *via* Paumben, to be left at the Custom House for the schooner.

"I have, &c.

(Signed)

"T. J. RIEDY,

"Superintendent Manaar Ferry.

"To the Immigration Labour Commissioners,
Colombo."

By papers since received from Ceylon, it appears that the poor whale, terrified by this adventure, and no doubt badly wounded by the anchor, continued its headlong flight, endeavouring to escape from the scene of its disaster; but on the following day it was drifted ashore dead at

Tondeman-aar, at the northern extremity of Ceylon. Here it was speedily cut up by the natives; and it is to be regretted that this was done with so much haste as to afford no opportunity for examining the nature of the injury it had received, or the mode in which it became transfixed by the anchor. The probability is, that it may have hooked itself in endeavouring to rub off the parasites by which the skin of these animals is sometimes tormented,—or, that being one of those species which feed not upon crustacea, but on fish, it may have entangled its jaw with one of the flukes of the anchor when in pursuit of its prey in deep water.

Properly speaking, a whale is not a *fish*; but though “not the rose, it lives so near the rose,” that this instance of a moving accident by flood forms no inappropriate prelude to the stories we have to introduce of fishes in the fields. We do not purpose to speak about those that inhabit the seas around Ceylon, although their forms and habits are sufficiently strange, but to confine ourselves exclusively to those in the fresh waters of the streams and ponds, amongst which the phenomena have been developed that so much excite astonishment.

Attention was first attracted to the fishes of the island, according to Sir J. Emerson Tennent, by two mysterious occurrences; one, the frequent fall of fishes from the sky during sudden storms; and the other, the unexpected appearance, after the periodical rains, of abundance of full-grown fish in places which the day before had been covered with sun-burnt clay or drifting dust. The second of these wonders it has been attempted to account for by the first; and the fishes caught in the previously dry hollows were conjectured to have fallen during showers. As to the actual fall of fish from passing clouds, the evidence is such as to leave no doubt of the fact. Well attested instances are numerous. The late Dr. Buist, of Bombay, made a collection of those that came within his observation. For instance, at Meerut, in 1824, fishes fell on the men of the 14th regiment when at drill, and were taken up in numbers. On the 19th of February, 1830, at noon, a heavy fall of fish occurred at the Nokulhatty factory, in the Daccah zillah; they were all dead; most of them were large; some were fresh, others were rotten and mutilated. On the 16th and 17th of May, 1833, a fall of fish occurred in the zillah of Futtehpoor, about three miles north of the Jumna, after a violent storm of wind and rain. The fish were from a pound and a half to three pounds in weight, and of the same species as those found in the tanks in the neighbourhood. They were all dead and dry. On the 20th of September, 1839, after a smart shower of rain, a number of live fish, about three inches in length, and all of the same kind, fell at the Sunderbunds, about twenty miles south of Calcutta. On this occasion it was remarked that the fish did not fall here and there irregularly over the ground, but in a continuous straight line, not more than a span in breadth. One of the most remarkable phenomena of this kind occurred during a tremendous deluge of rain at Kattywar, on the 25th of July, 1850, when the ground around Rajkote

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was literally covered with fish; some of them were found on the tops of haystacks, where probably they had been drifted by the storm.

As to the application of facts such as these to solve the mystery of the sudden reappearance of fishes in the previously dried-up tanks and ponds in Ceylon, Sir Emerson Tennent has assigned convincing reasons for rejecting that solution as insufficient. Admitting the entire accuracy of the theory which assumes that fishes so descending have been as suddenly caught up by squalls and whirlwinds, and allowed to drop after being carried a certain distance, he argues, that instances are too rare and uncertain to account for the periodical and punctual reappearance of fishes twice in each year, in hollows which are only overflowed after floods, and are exhausted to absolute dryness for months together.

Another conjecture is, that the fishes so discovered are the product of spawn deposited previously to the drying up of the water, but preserved by being embedded in the soil, and vivified by fresh moisture on the return of the tropical rains. This surmise is one sanctioned by the very highest authority. Mr. Yarrell, in his *History of British Fishes*, adverting to the fact that ponds (in India) which had been previously converted into hardened mud, are replenished with small fish in a very few days after the commencement of each rainy season, offers this solution of the problem:—

“The impregnated *ova* of the fish of one rainy season are,” he thinks, “left unhatched in the mud through the dry season, and from their low state of organization as *ova*, the vitality is preserved till the recurrence and contact of the rain and oxygen in the next wet season, when vivification takes place from their joint influence.”

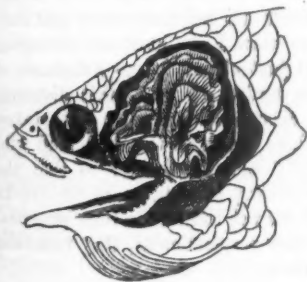
This hypothesis, however, appears to have been advanced upon imperfect data; for although some fish, like the salmon, scrape grooves in the sand, and place their spawn in inequalities and fissures, yet, as a general rule, spawn is deposited, not beneath, but on the surface of the ground, or sand, over which the water flows, the adhesive nature of each egg supplying the means of attachment. But, in the Ceylon tanks, not only is the surface of the soil dried to dust after the evaporation of the water, but the earth itself, for twelve or eighteen inches deep, is converted into indurated clay, in which, although the eggs of mollusca in their calcareous covering are in some instances preserved, it would appear to be as impossible for the *ova* of fish to be kept from decomposition as for the fish themselves to sustain life. Besides, moisture in such situations is only to be found at a depth to which spawn could not be conveyed by the parent fish, by any means with which we are yet acquainted.

“But supposing it possible,” says Sir J. Emerson Tennent, “to carry the spawn sufficiently deep, and to deposit it safely in the mud below, which is still damp, and whence it could be liberated on the return of the rains, still a considerable interval would be necessary after the replenishing of the ponds with water to admit of vivification and growth. Yet, so far from this interval being allowed to elapse, the rains have no sooner fallen than the taking of the fish commences, and those captured by the natives in wicker-cages are

mature and full-grown instead of being 'small fish' or fry, as supposed by Mr. Yarrell. Even admitting the soundness of his theory, and the probability that, under favourable circumstances, the spawn in the tanks might be preserved during the dry season, so as to contribute to the perpetuation of their breed, the fact is no longer doubtful, that adult fish in Ceylon, like some of those that inhabit similar waters both in the New and Old World, have been endowed by the Creator with the singular faculty of providing against the periodical droughts either by journeying overland in search of still unexhausted water, or, on its utter disappearance, by burying themselves in the mud to await the return of the rains."*

The fishes "of the New World" alluded to in this passage, are the *doras* of Guiana, and an allied genus in Carolina called *swampines*, which make long excursions in quest of water. Kirby, in his "Bridgewater Treatise," states the curious fact, connected not only with them, but with all other fishes that evince a similar propensity, that, by some unexplained instinct, they set out in the direction of the nearest water, however remote, as unerringly as the carrier-pigeon speeds through pathless ways to its unseen destination. Yarrell relates a story of eels kept in a garden, that, when August arrived (the period at which instinct impels them to go to the sea to spawn), they were in the habit of leaving the pond, and were invariably found moving eastward in the direction of the sea. We may add, that anglers observe that fish, newly caught, when placed out of sight of water, always struggle towards it to escape.

The fact of this faculty of moving on dry land having been duly ascertained, scientific anatomists were not slow in discovering the peculiar organization on which its exercise is dependent. The difficulty, as regards the fish, consists in their finding the means of storing up a supply of



moisture with which to keep the gills damp during the overland journeys; and this nature has provided, by furnishing it with a complex and labyrinthiform apparatus within the head—not spongy, because that would be inconsistent with the strength and solidity required, but formed of delicate plates of bone, so interlaced and closely arranged as to retain a quantity of water sufficient for these

perilous wanderings. The annexed drawing shows the head of one of these fishes, the *Anabas scandens*, with the outer covering partially removed, so as to exhibit the construction of the interior.

When the intense heat of the Indian summer begins to dry up the tanks and rivers, these little creatures, aided by this singular apparatus, issue boldly from their native pools and address themselves to their toil-

* *Sketches of the Natural History of Ceylon*, p. 344.

some march, generally at night or in the early morning, whilst the grass is still damp with the dew; but in their distress they are sometimes compelled to travel by day, and Mr. E. L. Layard on one occasion encountered a number of them moving along a hot and dusty gravel road under the mid-day sun.*

Mr. Morris, a gentleman of great intelligence in Ceylon, who has witnessed more than one of their emigrations, writing to a friend in 1856, thus described what he saw :—

"I was lately," he says, "on duty inspecting the bund of a large tank at Nade-cadua, which, being out of repair, the remaining water was confined in a small hollow in the otherwise dry bed. Whilst there, heavy rain came on, and, as we stood on the high ground, we observed a pelican on the margin of the shallow pool gorging himself. Our people went towards him and raised a cry of 'Fish! fish!' We hurried down, and found numbers of fish struggling upwards through the grass in the rills formed by the trickling of the rain. There was scarcely water enough to cover them, but nevertheless they made rapid progress up the bank, on which our followers collected about two bushels of them at a distance of about forty yards from the tank. They were forcing their way up the knoll, and, had they not been intercepted, first by the pelican and afterwards by ourselves, they would in a few minutes have gained the highest point and descended on the other side into a pool which formed another portion of the tank. They were chub, the same as are found in the mud after the tanks dry up."

In a subsequent communication, in July, 1857, the same gentleman writes :—

"As the tanks dry up the fish congregate in the little pools, till at last you find them in thousands in the moistest parts of the beds, rolling in the blue mud, which is at that time about the consistence of thick gruel. As the moisture further evaporates, the surface fish are left uncovered, and they crawl away in search of fresh pools. In one place I saw hundreds diverging in every direction from the tank they had just abandoned to a distance of fifty or sixty yards, and still travelling onwards. In going this distance, however, they must have used muscular exertion sufficient to have taken them half a mile on level ground, for at these places all the cattle and wild animals of the neighbourhood had latterly come to drink; so that the surface was everywhere indented with footmarks, in addition to the cracks in the surrounding baked mud, into which the fish tumbled in their progress. In those holes, which were deep and the sides perpendicular, they remained to die, and were carried off by kites and crows."

The fish which has achieved the greatest renown by its exploits of this kind is a perch, which from the circumstance of being actually detected in the attempt to ascend a palm tree, has obtained from his discoverer the name of *Perca scandens*. The story is thus related and commented on by Sir J. Emerson Tennent :—

"Two Danish naturalists, residing at Tranquebar, have contributed

* *Annals and Mag. of Nat. Hist.*, May 1853, p. 390.

their authority to the fact of this fish ascending trees on the coast of Coromandel, an exploit from which it acquired its epithet of *Perca scandens*. Daldorf, who was a lieutenant in the Danish East India Company's service, communicated to Sir Joseph Banks, that in the year 1791 he had taken this fish from a moist cavity in the stem of a Palmyra palm, that grew near a lake. He saw it when already five feet above the ground struggling to ascend still higher;—"suspending itself by its gill-covers, and bending its tail to the left, it fixed its anal fin in the cavity of the bark, and sought by expanding its body to urge its way upwards, and its march was only arrested by the hand with which he seized it." "There is considerable obscurity about the story of this ascent, although corroborated by M. John. Its motive for climbing is not apparent, since water being close at hand it could not have gone for sake of the moisture contained in the fissures of the palm; nor could it be in search of food, as it lives not on fruit but on aquatic insects. The descent, too, is a question of difficulty. The position of its fins, and the spines on its gill-covers, might assist its journey upwards, but the same apparatus would prove anything but a facility in steadying its journey down. The probability is, as suggested by Buchanan, that the ascent which was witnessed by Daldorf was accidental, and ought not to be regarded as the habit of the animal."

But whatever be the merits of Daldorf's discovery scientifically, it is curious that as an incident it had been anticipated by an Arabian voyager a thousand years before. Abou-zeyd, the compiler of the remarkable MS. known, since Renaudot's translation of it, by the title of "Travels of the Two Mahometans," states that Süleyman, one of his informants, who visited India at the close of the ninth century, was told there of a fish which, issuing from the waters, ascended the cocoa-nut palms to drink their sap, and returned to the sea. "*On parle d'un poisson de mer qui, sortant de l'eau, monte sur la cocotier et boit le suc de la plante; ensuite il retourne à la mer.*"*

Such, then, are the instincts and such the efforts of these peculiarly-circumstanced and as peculiarly-formed fishes, so long as a chance remains of escaping to fresh water from the threatened exhaustion of their own. But so soon as this hope becomes extinct they prepare to secrete themselves in the soil at the bottom of the ponds, and, there interred, to wait with patience the return of the rains. In execution of this intent, they have been observed, as the tanks become evaporated nearly to dryness, to immerse first their heads, and by degrees their whole bodies, in the mud, sinking to a depth at which they find sufficient moisture to preserve life in a state of lethargy long after the bed of the tank has been consolidated by the intense heat of the sun. It is possible, too, that the cracks which reticulate the surface may admit air to some extent to sustain their faint respiration.

The same thing takes place in other tropical regions, subject to vicissi-

* See REINAUD. *Rélations des Voyages faits par les Arabes et Persans dans le neuvième siècle*. Tom. i., p. 21; Tom. ii., p. 93.

tudes of draught and moisture. The *Protopterus*, which inhabits the Gambia, and of which living specimens were lately exhibited at the Crystal Palace, as well as at the Zoological Gardens in London, is accustomed in the dry season, when the river retires into its channel, to bury itself to the depth of twelve or sixteen inches in the indurated mud of the banks, and there to remain in a state of torpor, till the rising of the stream after the rains enable it to resume its active habits. At this period the natives of the Gambia resort to the river, and secure the fish in considerable numbers, as they flounder in the still shallow water.

In those portions of Ceylon where the country is flat, and small tanks for irrigation very numerous, the natives are accustomed in the dry season to dig in the mud for fish. Mr. Whiting, the chief civil officer of the Eastern province, on two occasions was present accidentally when the villagers were so engaged; once at the tank of Malliativoe, within a few miles of Kottiar, near the Bay of Trincomalee, and again at a tank between Ellendetorre and Arnitivoe, on the bank of the Vergel river. Writing to Sir J. Emerson Tennent, he says—

“The clay was firm, but moist; and as the men flung out lumps of it with a spade it fell to pieces, disclosing fish from nine to twelve inches long, which were full-grown and healthy, and jumped on the bank when exposed to the sun-light.”

Thus, then, it has been reserved for this observant gentleman to bear eye-witness in the nineteenth century to the reality of a phenomenon, the bare mention of which sufficed to impair the credibility of Livy, to disturb the gravity of Seneca, and to excite the sarcastic humour of Juvenal.

THE BRILLIANT KEEPER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "EAST LYNNE."

It was a comfortable room, even for the West-end of London. It was not the grand drawing-room of the house; it was not the commodious dining-room, where Sir Philip's patients waited their turn to go in to him; it was only a small, cozy apartment, with a bright fire, easy chairs, and, generally, plenty of litter. For a wonder, it was tidy now; nothing was on the centre table, save Lady Annesley's desk, at which she sat writing—a plain, pleasant woman of forty, wearing weeds yet. The late Sir Robert, a popular and successful physician, had risen in the world and got his baronetcy: but this had been his second wife.

On a low sofa, near the fire, sat an old lady—a cheerful, nice old lady, in spite of her blindness and her eighty-four years. She would tell you, could you speak with her, that God had seen fit to take her dear son, Sir Robert, and had spared her. Upon her lap was a bag made of white linen, resembling a pillow-case, but not so long; and she was stuffing it with handfuls of paper torn into minute bits. Since she became blind she was wont to employ some of her time in tearing up waste-paper, newspapers and the like, to stuff cushions. Maria Carr, Lady Annesley's niece, was at the far window making the case for this cushion: two square pieces of white velvet, on each of which was painted an exquisite group of flowers, Maria's doing. The cushion was intended for a present for Mary Annesley, who was on the point of marriage with Dr. Scott. She had gone out now with the late Sir Robert Annesley's ward, Georgina Livingston, who lived with them.

Mrs. Annesley looked up from her cushion and her bits of paper—if it be allowable to say that of one who has no sight; but when she spoke to people, she was in the habit of turning her face in the direction she thought they might be, as she had done before the darkness came on: "What about Charley's going to church? Is it decided?"

"Well; I suppose—" Lady Annesley stopped. The door had hastily opened, and a gentleman entered—a tall, fine man. But for the sweet smile that frequently parted his lips and lighted up his dark blue eyes, his features might have been deemed plain. And yet, ladies were apt to say that Sir Philip Annesley, being unmarried, was too attractive for a medical man.

"Is that Philip?"

"Myself, and nobody else, grandmamma;" for Sir Philip sometimes, half in sport, addressed her by the old familiar title of his boyhood.

"Who will lend me a finger?"

"A finger!" echoed Lady Annesley. "What for? Ask Maria."

Maria laid down her velvet, and came forward. Sir Philip opened a little square box, and, taking out a ring, passed it on to the third, or

wedding-finger, of her left hand. She stood before him, perfectly quiet in motion and bearing, but blushing to the very roots of her hair. Two thin chains of gold crossed and re-crossed each other, enclosing a brilliant between each crossing—twelve brilliants in all, small, but of the first water—a jewel of rare beauty, remarkably light and elegant.

"Philip, what a beautiful ring!" uttered Lady Annesley.

"Yes; it took my fancy. Mary will like a keeper, and Scott, in his absent fashion, is sure not to think of one. Lucky, I say, if he remembers the wedding-ring. It is too large; is it not, Maria?"

"Much too large for a keeper. Mary would require another ring to keep this one on."

"I ought to have chosen the smaller one," said Sir Philip. "There is another, just like it, only less in size. I'll take this one back and change it."

"It must have cost a good deal?" said Lady Annesley.

"Pretty well. Forty-eight guineas."

Mrs. Annesley lifted her hands in dismay. "Oh, Philip! Forty-eight guineas for a ring! It seems next door to a sin. Your father, my dear, would have looked twice at a quarter of the money before giving it."

He crossed the room, and put the keeper into her hand, bending down to her, and speaking gently. "Feel it, grandmother; it really is a beauty. I know the sum is large; but we do not give away Mary every day."

Mrs. Annesley passed her fingers over the ring, after the manner of the blind, and handed it back to him. "Philip, when do you intend to buy a wedding keeper on your own account? Ever?"

That sweet smile of his rose to his lips, and perhaps the least tinge of colour to his face. "A doctor has no time to think of such things."

"No time?" returned the old lady, taking the remark literally. "I think he has as much time for it as other people. Where there's a will there's a way. Philip, do you know [that] you are in your thirty-fifth year?"

"And do you know also what your patients say?" put in Lady Annesley. "They say——"

"I can guess: that will do!" interrupted Sir Philip, with a laugh. "If they don't like an unmarried man, they need not come to me. Let them go elsewhere."

"Not they," said Lady Annesley, significantly. "Philip, you really ought to marry. Delay it another ten years, and your children will be growing up when you are an old man. I wish you would: it would set my mind at rest."

"At rest from what?" asked Sir Philip, in a hasty and somewhat sharp tone.

"Oh, well; I am not going to explain," answered Lady Annesley. "At rest in more ways than one."

"Provided, I presume, that I married to please you," cried Sir Philip, who fully understood the bye-play.

"Of course not to please me, Philip—I am nobody. To please your sisters, and to please the world."

"Terrible if I married only to please myself, would it not be, Lady Annesley?" he laughed.

He had never called her "mother:" at one time had studiously called her "Lady Annesley." Four-and-twenty years of age when his father married this, his second wife, Philip, in his inmost heart, had rebelled at the union. They all had, at first; but they learnt to like her in time. The girls were married now, save Mary, who would be the last.

"It is no joking matter, Philip. What a nice rose that is in your button-hole!" continued Lady Annesley. "Where did you get it?"

"Out of Mrs. Leigh's conservatory,"—he replied, taking it from his coat—a magnificent white rose, beautiful as a camellia—"she seduced me into it just now, when I was at her house."

"Is her daughter better?"

"No, poor girl. And I fear——"

Sir Philip did not say what he feared. He was not one to speak, at home, of his patients. In the silence that supervened, a servant appeared.

"Lady Oliver, Sir."

Sir Philip nodded; stood a moment or two, as if in thought; then prepared to descend.

"Will you put this up for me?" he said, giving the diamond keeper to Lady Annesley as he passed her. "I will change it when I go out. There, Maria! a present for you."

He flung the white rose into Maria's lap. She did not touch it, only let it lie there, her cheeks again growing hot. Lady Annesley knitted her brow. But it cleared as her eyes fell on the ring.

"I never did see a greater beauty!" she enthusiastically exclaimed, as she slipped it several times on and off her finger. "But what a judge Philip must have been to get it so large as this! Who is this, coming up?"

It was Charles Carr, Maria's brother, popularly known in the house as "Charley." A young lieutenant he; gay, careless, and handsome. Often in scrapes, always in trouble; deep in debt, in "bills," in many things that he ought not to be; altogether, a gentleman who was believed to be going to the bad headlong, especially by Lady Annesley. He was her own nephew, her dead brother's son; and he came to the house, presuming upon the relationship and upon Maria's residence in it, oftener than Lady Annesley liked. A great fear was at her heart that he had grown too fond of Georgina Livingston, or that Georgina had of him—perhaps both. *Her* penniless nephew, who had not cross or coin to bless himself with, steal Georgina and her nine hundred a year! The world

would talk then—would say that she, Lady Annesley, had planned it! And Lady Annesley was remarkably sensitive to the world's censure.

Charley glittered in, in full regimentals; one of the handsomest young fellows that had ever bowed before Her Majesty at St. James's. And he had no objection that somebody else should see him and think so.

"Where's Georgina?" asked he.

"Georgina's out," snappishly replied Lady Annesley. "What are you dressed up for?"

"I have just come from the Levee. Did you forget it?" he returned, taking up mechanically the little jewel-box and opening it. Charley's fingers had a trick of touching things, and he often got a rap on the knuckles for it, literally and metaphorically, from my lady. "What a splendid ring!" he uttered.

"Sir Philip's present to Mary. But it is to be changed; it is too large."

Charley put it on his little finger and turned it round admiringly; as they had all done. "A charming ring!" he repeated. "It is really beautiful."

"Do you not wish it were yours?" laughed Maria, from her distant window.

"I wish I had the cost of it," he said. "That would be of more use to me. What was it? Fifty guineas?"

"Not a bad guess," said Lady Annesley, who really liked Charley, and his good looks, and his good nature, *au fond*, when she could forget the fear and trouble touching Miss Georgina.

They stood together, singing praises of the ring; now she had it on—now he. Lady Annesley at length took it from him, and held it over the open box, as if taking a farewell of it before she dropped it in.

"Oh dear!" cried out Mrs. Annesley.

Lady Annesley hastily put the lid on, left the box on the table by Charley, and ran to her mother-in-law. The old lady had let the sack fall upon the hearthrug, and some of the ammunition was falling out.

"Don't trouble yourself, my dear," she said, as Lady Annesley began pushing it in. "Put it on my lap again; I won't be so clumsy a second time. It is nearly full, you see."

Lady Annesley did as requested, and returned to the table. Charley, restless Charley, was then standing by Maria, and the two were whispering together. Lady Annesley took a sheet of fair white paper and wrapped up the little box, without again looking in it, lighted a wax match, and sealed it.

"Well, I must be off," cried Charles. "Shall you be at home this evening?"

"I shall," laughed grandmamma, from her place on the sofa. "I don't suppose many of the others will be out." She had not penetrated to Lady Annesley's fear; and Charley was a wonderful favourite of hers.

"Look, Maria," said Lady Annesley, as they heard Charley and his sword clattering down the stairs four at a time—"I will put it here. If Philip should come for it, you can tell him where it is."

She lifted the lid of her desk and put in the little box. Then approached Mrs. Annesley and took hold of her arm to lead her from the room. "We shall have no drive to-day, unless we make haste. Maria will finish that."

"It's finished, all but tacking," said the old lady; "it is as full as it ought to be. Maria, my dear, come and do it at once."

Maria carried her velvet to the sofa, and set about completing the cushion, kneeling down for convenience sake. She had got the velvet cover on to it, and was beginning to put round the gold cord and to sew on the tassels, when Sir Philip entered. He rested his arms on the back of the sofa, and looked down at her and her work—a fair girl she, with a gentle face.

"I wonder if folks would send *me* presents if I set up housekeeping on my own score?" cried he.

"You had better try them," said Maria. But she spoke the words without thought, and felt, the moment they had left her lips, that she had rather have bitten out her tongue than uttered them.

"But the flitting from the house for all of you, what a trouble it would be!" returned he, in a tone of much remonstrance. "I don't know that every one of you would have to go, though," he continued, while the too-conscious crimson dyed her face, and she played nervously with the gold cord.

"Certainly not, if Lady Annesley had her way," he resumed. Maria, astonished at the words, glanced at him in amazement. "Don't you see it all, Maria?"

"See what?" she exclaimed.

"Nay, I shall not tell you. So much the better if you have not seen it. I thought it had been patent to the house. My vanity may be in error, after all."

"What *do* you mean, Sir Philip?"

He was gazing hard at her with his deep blue eyes—vain and saucy enough they were, just then. She felt completely at sea.

"Give me your opinion, Maria? If I did resolve to set up housekeeping for myself, do you think that any one of you could be induced to stop and help me in it?"

Her heart beat violently;—her eyes fell. The gold cord in her fingers was wreathing itself into knots. Sir Philip came round and laid his hand upon her shoulder as she knelt, making her turn her face to him.

"Because I may be asking the question some day. Do you know where Lady Annesley put the ring?"

She sprang up. She opened the desk, and gave the parcel to him,

sealed as Lady Annesley had left it. He slipped it into his waistcoat pocket, went down to his brougham, and drove off.

In less than twenty minutes he was back again, and came flying up the stairs as fast as Charley Carr had flown down them.

"A pretty simpleton you made of me, Maria!—giving me an empty box!"

"An empty box!" she echoed.

He took the box out of his pocket, and held it open before her.

"I told the man I had brought back the ring to exchange for the smaller one, opened the box, all gingerly, to hand it to him, and behold! there was nothing in it."

"Did you drop it in the brougham? Did you open it in the brougham?" she reiterated.

"I never touched it, after you saw me put it in my pocket, until I was in the shop. I unsealed the paper before the shopman's eyes."

"Then where can it be?" exclaimed Maria. "Lady Annesley certainly sealed it up, and put it, herself, in the desk, ready for you. No one went near the desk afterwards—no one came into the room, or was in the room, but myself."

"Lady Annesley must have sealed up an empty box, that's clear," said Sir Philip. "I have brought the other ring."

But Lady Annesley, when she entered, protested that she had not sealed up an empty box—that the ring was in it. And she related the details to Sir Philip, as they have been given above. The box, she said, was not out of her hand a minute altogether.

"Are you sure you put it *in*?—that you did not let it slip aside?" questioned Sir Philip.

"Sure!" repeated Lady Annesley, half inclined to resent the implied suggestion of carelessness; "I am quite sure. And, had the ring slipped aside, it would only have gone on to the table. I put it in safely, and shut it in."

"Who was in the room, beside yourselves?" asked Sir Philip.

"Only Charley Carr. He was standing by me, wishing that the ring were his."

"No," cried out Mrs. Annesley, innocently; "wishing its value in money was his! The more sensible wish of the two."

A wild, sickening sensation darted to Maria Carr's brain. It was not yet a suspicion; it was a fear lest suspicion should come: nay, a foreboding that it *was* coming.

The suspicion did come: came immediately, to all of them. In vain Sir Philip suggested that Charles must have done it in a joke, to put Lady Annesley in a fright, for he was as full of tricks as a monkey—that he would bring it back with him in the evening. That he had taken the ring from the box there was no doubt whatever; and Lady Annesley, in her anger, refused to be soothed.

She attacked Charles the moment he made his appearance. "Where's that keeper?" she sternly demanded, without circumlocution.

"What keeper?" returned Charles.

"The brilliant keeper, that you made off with to-day."

"I don't know what you mean, aunt."

Lady Annesley flew into a rage. "I left the box close to your hands when I turned to pick up the cushion for Mrs. Annesley. How dared you take the ring out?"

"Let's see whether I have got it about me," retorted Charley, in a careless, indifferent, provoking manner, as he made a show of feeling in all his pockets. "Oh—I must have left it in my regimentals."

Lady Annesley nearly boiled over. Words led to words; Charles grew angry in his turn; and at length she gave a hint that he must have *stolen* the ring. He declared he had not touched the box, or the ring; that he had turned from the table when Lady Annesley did, and remained talking to Maria while the cushion was being picked up; and he swore to this with sundry unorthodox words, forgetting that he was not in quarters, but in a lady's drawing-room.

"If nobody takes his part, I will!" hotly cried Georgina Livingston, after Charles had dashed away from the house, promising that he'd never enter it again; and her countenance was distressed, and her cheeks were scarlet, as she said it. "Steal a ring! You may just as well accuse me, Lady Annesley, as accuse him; I should be the more likely of the two to do it."

"Do, pray, recollect yourself, Georgina!" remonstrated my lady. "Is this avowal seemly for a young girl?"

"I don't care whether it's seemly or unseemly," responded Miss Georgina, dashing away some tears. "You ought to be ashamed of yourselves, all of you! Because Charley happens not to be made of money, you turn against him, and think he'd *take* it. I'll let him know that *I* don't."

Hot words, hotly spoken. A few days, and even Georgina was obliged to judge him less leniently. Sir Philip chose quietly to investigate the suspicion; and he ascertained that Charles had, the very evening subsequent to the loss of the ring, and the following day, paid sundry small debts, for which he had been long dunned. Twenty pounds, at least, of these payments were traced, and then Sir Philip dropped the search. Why pursue it? It was all too clear, for Charles had no resources of his own to draw upon.

But here Maria stepped in to his defence. She protested with earnestness, with tears, that she had furnished him herself with twenty pounds; that she had given it to him in that moment when they were whispering together. She knew Charles's wants, she said, and had been saving this money up for him. Lady Annesley flatly contradicted Maria. It did not stand to reason, she contended, that Maria, with her poor

means, could save up twenty pounds, or even ten. The thing was almost against possibility; and Maria fell under nearly as great a ban as her brother, for attempting to screen him by falsehood. There were moments when, in her own sick heart, Maria did believe him to be guilty. Such things have been heard of in the world—done in the recklessness of necessity.

A twelvemonth passed away—and a twelvemonth brings changes. Georgina Livingston was of age now, and at liberty to choose her own residence. She was alone in the drawing-room one April evening. Mrs. Annesley was much confined to her chamber, and Lady Annesley had gone up to her. Sir Philip came in.

"Alone, Georgina! Why! what is the matter?—crying?"

"Oh, Lady Annesley set me on!" was the young lady's pettish rejoinder, as she brushed the tears away. "She was angry with me for 'moping,' as she called it; and I told her I would not stay here to be grumbled at."

"Why do you mope?" he asked.

"Because I choose," was the wilful retort. "I *can* leave now if I like you know, Philip."

"If you like—yes," assented Sir Philip. "Where should you go?"

"I don't know, and I don't much care," dreamily responded Georgina.

"Would you like to remain in the house for good?" resumed Sir Philip, after a pause. "I was thinking of asking you to do so."

A faint blush rose to her face, but she showed no other emotion: and his tone, considering the momentous words, was wonderfully calm. Perhaps both had been conscious for some little time that these words would be spoken. Sir Philip bent his head towards her.

"The world has reproached me with not marrying. Help me, Georgina, to put the reproach away! There is no one I would ask to be my wife but you."

"Look here, Philip!" she exclaimed, pushing back her hair, and turning her face, full of its own eager excitement, towards him—excitement not caused by him. "I'll speak out the truth to you; I could not to every one: but you are good, and true, and noble. Were I to say to you 'Yes,' and let you take me believing that I loved you, I should just be acting a lie. I loved some one else; I am trying to forget him with my whole heart and might—but I did love him."

"Who was this?"

"Charles Carr."

Sir Philip's blue eyes flashed with a peculiar light, and he looked into the fire—not at Georgina.

"That love ought to end," he said. "It can bring you no good."

"Don't I tell you that it has ended—that I am putting it from me as fast as ever I can? But the remembrance cannot go all at once. I did

love him; and I believe it was your generosity, in hushing up his dreadful disgrace, instead of proclaiming it and prosecuting him, that first made me like you more than common."

"You acknowledge, then, that you do like me?" smiled Sir Philip.

"Very—very much."

"Well enough to take me for better and for worse?"

"Yes; if, after this confession, you would still wish it."

"I do," he answered, drawing her to him, and taking his first kiss from her lips. Georgina flew to her room, and there burst into a flood of tears.

Lady Annesley was strangely elated at the news. She had hoped for it in her inmost heart—long and long.

"You have done well, Philip," she said to her step-son.

"I shall escape the worrying about not getting married, at any rate," responded Sir Philip.

"Philip"—lowering her voice confidentially—"do you know, I frightened myself to death, at one time, lest you should marry Maria. I fancied you were growing attached to her; and people would have said I had set it on."

The red colour flashed into Sir Philip's face. "I should have married her, but for that affair of the diamond keeper."

Lady Annesley looked blank. "Did you like her so much as that?"

"Like her!" he echoed, in emotion, "I *loved* her. I am not sure but I love her still. Why, Lady Annesley, I *all but* asked her to be my wife the very afternoon that wretched boy did the mischief."

"I'm sure I am very glad he did do it, if it prevented that," retorted my lady.

"I might have got over that; his fault; but I could not get over Maria's. To uphold him in his deceit—to invent a falsehood to screen him—how could I make her my wife?"

"Whatever is there about Maria to like?" fretfully interrupted Lady Annesley.

"She's more *likeable* than any one in this world, to my thinking——"

"Hush, Philip!"

The news of the engagement went forth to the house. Maria had still remained in it, making herself useful, as she had done before, especially to Mrs. Annesley, for she had no other home. Better she had quitted it: to see Sir Philip daily was not the way to cure her love for him.

"I hope you will be happy, Sir Philip; I wish you every happiness," she stammered, believing it was incumbent on her to say something to him to that effect. But Sir Philip observed that her face turned ghastly with emotion as she spoke.

"Thank you; I hope we shall be," he coldly replied; and, since that unhappy episode, he had never spoken to her *but* coldly. "Georgina Livingston possesses one great essential towards making herself and others happy—truth."

The preparations for the wedding went briskly on. Lady Annesley would first move into another residence. No change had been made since Sir Robert's death, but Sir Philip must have his house to himself now. One evening Sir Philip was spending an hour with Dr. Scott. A navy surgeon was also there—Mr. Blake, once their chum at Bartholomew's: and Georgina was sitting upstairs with Mary Scott and her baby.

"Is smoking allowed here?" asked the surgeon—glancing at the elegant sofa on which he sat, where was displayed that beautiful cushion painted by Maria Carr—"I'm half dead without my pipe."

Receiving assent, he lighted it, and then walked across the room to Sir Philip and the Doctor, who stood at the window. There was some disturbance in the street, and they all three remained there chatting and looking out.

Suddenly a burst of light shot up in the twilight of the room, and they wheeled round in consternation. A blaze was ascending from the velvet cushion. They caught up the hearthrug and succeeded in putting out the fire. Georgina Livingston, hearing the commotion, came in with a white face.

In lighting his pipe Mr. Blake must have suffered a spark to fall upon the cushion. There it had smouldered, penetrating at length to the stuffing, which then blazed up. You may remember that it consisted of paper.

"Oh, that lovely cushion!" lamented Georgina.

"What's this?" uttered Dr. Scott, picking up something bright and glistening from the ashes. "If I don't believe it's a ring!"

A ring it was. The lost, the beautiful, the brilliant keeper! The eyes of Sir Philip and Georgina met.

Maria was, that same evening, sitting alone; she and her breaking heart. It had felt breaking ever since that cloud fell upon it. She heard Sir Philip come home—and she began gathering her work together.

"Don't run away, Maria; I have something to tell you!"

She looked at him in wonderment. His voice wore the same loving tone as in days gone by; a tone long past, for her.

"Lend me your hand, Maria!" And, without waiting for assent, he took it in his, the left hand, and slipped upon the third finger, as he had done once before, the diamond keeper. "Do you recognize it?"

"It is Mrs. Scott's," replied Maria. "Why have you brought it here, Sir Philip?"

"It is not Mrs. Scott's: it is larger than hers. Do not remove it, Maria. It shall be your own keeper, if you will let me add the wedding-ring."

Confused, bewildered, wondering what it meant, wondering at the strangely loving expression that gleamed on her from his dark blue eyes, she burst into tears. Was he saying this to mock her?

No: not to mock her. No! Sir Philip wound his arms round her as he told the tale; he drew her face to his breast, his eyelashes glistening in the intensity of his emotion. "I can never let you go again,

my darling! I do not ask your forgiveness; I know that you will give it me unasked, for you and I have been alike miserable."

"Charley innocent!—been innocent all this while?" she gasped.

"He has, in good truth! We must try and make it up to him. I——"

"Oh, Philip!" she interrupted, with streaming eyes; "you will believe me now! I did give him the twenty pounds—I did, indeed! I had saved in so many trifles; I had made old gowns look like new ones; all for him. *You* should not have doubted me, if the rest did."

"My whole life shall atone to you, Maria," he softly whispered. "Georgina——"

She broke from him, her cheeks flushing crimson. In the moment's bewilderment she had totally forgotten his engagement to Georgina. He laughed merrily, his eyes dancing, and drew her back again.

"Never fear that I am about to turn Mormon, and marry you both! Georgina has given me up, Maria. In the excitement caused by the discovery, she spoke her mind out to me, that she did not like me, with all her 'trying,' half as well as she did Charley Carr, and that none but Charley should be her husband. Scott has gone to tell Charles the news, and bring him up. If——"

"What on earth is this?" ejaculated Lady Annesley, as she came n and stood like one petrified.

"It's this," replied Sir Philip, holding out Maria's hand, on which shone the brilliant keeper. "This mischief-making ring has turned up again. When you held it that day over the open box, and Mrs. Annesley called out, there can be no doubt that you, in the hurry, unconsciously slipped it on your finger, instead of into the box, and lost it off your finger again immediately amidst the paper stuffing. The cushion has just given up its prey."

* Lady Annesley sank upon the first seat, with a very crest-fallen expression. "I never heard of such a thing!" she stammered. "*My* finger! Whatever will be the consequence? Poor Charley!"

"The consequence, I expect, will be that you will have two weddings instead of one," laughed Sir Philip. "Georgina has proclaimed *her* intentions, and I don't suppose Charley will bear malice. I think I ought to have given the ring to him as a memento, instead of to Maria."

"To Maria!" irascibly returned Lady Annesley, not precisely understanding, but not feeling comfortable. "What in the world need is there to give it to her, Sir Philip?"

"Great need," he replied, his tone becoming serious. "But it is given with a condition attached to it—that I add one of plain gold. Ah! Lady Annesley, we cannot be false to ourselves, try as we will. Maria has remained my best and dearest love up to this hour, cajole and deceive my heart as I would. And now, I trust, she will remain so, so long as time shall last!"

THE SOVEREIGN'S MESSENGER.

BY "THE MAN WITH THE BLACK BAG."

PART II.

"HARK how the wind whistles, and how dark the night looms!" said Colonel Crampton, as he rose to order our horses. "I fear we are in for a heavy fall of snow. Never mind, it is well that you should at once be initiated into the pleasures of a Russian winter, and, as you desired it, practically enjoy the delights of travelling with a Royal Messenger. On my life, I do verily believe the good people of England, 'who live at home at ease,' imagine that we journey through Europe in a palanquin, or as young ladies with a wealthy papa and first-rate courier saunter down the Rhine in bright autumn time. They would judge differently, I fancy, had they to face such a night as is before us; so make up your mind for the worst."

"I fear nothing with so cheerful a companion," I replied. "Moreover, it is as well to begin with a storm."

"Finish your tea, then, and let me recommend you to add a glass of Cognac to the last cup; then put on your furs, and jump into the carriage. You will experience warmth for a few leagues, at all events. The tea is excellent, is it not, and a zomovar the best of tea-urns?*" Nevertheless, travellers in Russia differ as to its being the best restorative by the way-side. On one occasion I was strongly recommended by a real Russian prince (there are very many whose lineage it would be difficult to trace), a true noble, both by blood, mind, and acts, to try cold water. 'A glass of cold water taken in your carriage,' said he, 'is far better than hot rooms and hot tea.' I confess I have never tried it, as I have known a bottle of sherry to freeze in two hours, and I have always thought it possible water might freeze in my inward man; so I recommend hot tea and a dash of brandy or good rum. Light your pipe, and let us be off."

We had scarcely travelled twenty versts at a rapid rate ere we entered a pine forest—dark and dismal, and of interminable length, when the snow fell heavily, and the wind howled like so many demons.

"Pleasant weather, is it not?" said the Colonel, wrapping himself up in his furs, and puffing out clouds of smoke; "pleasant, is it not? Well, my good friend, it is nothing when you are used to it; and the high-bred gentlemen who live at home at ease, in the midst of red tape and morning papers in the neighbourhood of Downing Street, know as much about it, practically or physically, as a lobster does of what he has endured when taken red from the water in which he has been boiled. Moreover, no amount of money, mark you, can at times repay for the sufferings of cold." (The snow now came down in sack-loads—I really

* "Zomovar," already mentioned as a Russian urn.

know no other manner of describing it—and the wind roared through the forest as if a whole pack of wolves were waging war with one another. It was fortunate they did not make war with us, for, when maddened with hunger, they are by no means particular—a Russian prince, a “tallow merchant,” or a Royal Messenger eat equally well.) “However, I told you, ere we started, you would see no flower-bedecked, snug English cottages by the way-side; no broad-spreading English oaks; no cozy road-side inns; none of the comforts of home, which, whether simple or luxurious, are only fully appreciated by those who really travel. Mark you, I by no means infer, by travelling, taking a pleasant autumn tour, or even a trip up the Nile or to Jerusalem, with a cook, and a servant who speaks all the languages in Europe, makes your coffee ere you rise in the morning, poaches your eggs, or mends your pantaloons, with half Fortnum and Mason’s stock of potted meats, marmalades and jams, to fall back upon when the commissariat of the country fails: but your traveller who leaves the beaten track, or he whose duties oblige him to journey for several nights running in a cramped carriage or an over-filled railway, without room to stretch your legs, and a cricked neck when you awake from a disturbed slumber, with your feet half frozen; then to get up, after a few hours’ slumber, by the light of a dip, with the thermometer far below freezing-point; or cross, on a pitch-dark night, in a French steamer, the Gulf of Lyons, or that of Genoa, with a north-easter in your teeth. Nevertheless, there are, I believe, many who have done and dared all this—even fair ladies; yet I fancy I am not in error in believing the first attempt has been the last. However, as I said, we are in for a rough night, so if you are not prepared to face it, let me put you down at once; you can make your way back to the post-house; the road is straight, and, at all events, you will be warm, but probably snowed up for a week.”

“Thank you,” said I, laughing; “with your permission I shall stick to the carriage and your pleasant companionship.”

“Be it so. How the wind howls; and our poor half-clad postilion drives like mad. I hope he has not fortified himself with an overdose of *racci*; for it was on or about the self-same spot where we now are, in this dark and dismal forest, that I passed one of the most unpleasant—I may add dangerous—hours of my life, owing to my driver being drunk, of which I was not aware when I started. True, the night was not like this; on the contrary, the sky was clear, the moon shone brightly, and the weather was intensely cold; in fact, the centre of the road was hard, and, consequently, I travelled in a sledge, and alone, although on each side of the tract the snow lay many feet deep. I had gone through the ordeal we went through two hours since; had my hot tea—not forgetting the dash of Cognac—lighted my pipe, and jumped, warm and comfortable, into my sledge—so warm and comfortable, in fact, that I soon fell into a sound and undisturbed sleep; when all at once I was roused from my home-dreams by a tremendous crash, to find myself, sledge and horses,

half buried in the snow. To rub my eyes, jump from my sledge—heavily fur-clad as I was—up to my thighs in the snow (for there had been a recent thaw, and the snow was soft on the road-sides), and at the same time to recollect that I was unarmed and alone in a Russian forest, at two a.m., with my despatches in my sledge, and no help at hand, was the work of a moment. The next, to listen to a human howl of such intensity which echoed through the forest, that I verily believe no pack of wolves could have rivalled it, and at the same time to discover my postilion in fierce combat with one of the tallest and most powerful men I ever beheld, while a dozen others were howling and flocking to the scene of action. By the light of the bright moon I also beheld in the road-track before me about a score of heavily-laden sledges, conveying merchandise, while two, with their horses, lay floundering in the snow on the opposite side of the road, against which we had driven, and got the worst of it. All this, however, occurred in far less time than I have told it. Before I proceed, however, I must remark to you, that while every word I speak is fact, an order did exist, and probably still exists in Russia, that everything shall make way for those travelling with courier horses—that is to say, travelling officially; but the wretched serf—alas! more animal than man—who drove me, though not too drunk to keep the road, or at least to allow his little horses to do so at a gallop, was far too drunk to see the impossibility of passing anything but a flock of crows in the tract, narrow as it was, between two high banks of soft snow. Therefore, as I subsequently found out, although every effort had been made, on his blowing his horn, to let him pass, it was in vain. But he was in no state to reason—moreover, saw double. Thus, driving with fury, he upset the hindmost sledge, at the same time lashing the driver with his whip; but the second shock was too great even for my heavier sledge—we were fixed, horses and sledge, fast in the deep snow.

“Happily, most happily, reason came to my aid, and I thought that in the very dangerous position in which I found myself, discretion was far better than valour. It was quite evident my postilion was in fault, and had I attempted to take his part, or make any effort to defend him, my own life, as my despatches, would have been perilled. Heavily, therefore, as I was clad, observing that blows had already passed between him and the athletic Pole I have named, I made a rush at the former, wrenched his uplifted whip from his hand, seized him firmly by the throat, and having thrown him backwards on the snow, I stood with outstretched hands calmly before him. Meanwhile, the whole mass of sledge-drivers had gathered around us, evidently showering imprecations on our heads,—which, fortunately perhaps, I did not understand—and sending forth the most diabolical howl I have ever heard before or since. Cold as was the night, the perspiration stood on my forehead, and if I did not experience absolute fear, I certainly uttered an inward prayer for God’s protection, and felt that the odds were fifty to one I should perish like a dog, or be

murdered, far, far away from all I loved on earth, in this dense solitude. Indeed, had I ventured to strike a blow, or made the slightest effort in defence, the fate of both of us would have been sealed, for I never beheld such brutal anger and ferocity as those which I saw by the light of the brilliant moon depicted on the face of their leader, as by signs, offers of money, and calm demeanour, I was endeavouring to appease him. At this moment the postilion whom I had thrown down on the snow rose to his feet. Luckily I had possessed myself of his whip; for, making a rush to the leaders, he cut their slight cord traces, vaulting on one of the animal's back, tried to make off—whether to escape or for assistance I know not, but thought rapid as lightning soon told me, that if left alone I must perish in the snow, even if I escaped a worse fate. Once more, then (he was intoxicated, recollect, and a lighter man than myself), I pulled him on the snow, when, at that moment, most happily, a travelling Polish serf, who spoke German, appeared on the field of action, coming from the direction towards which we were bent. He immediately came to my side, and to him, perhaps, as much as the calm demeanour which God permitted me to assume in the hour of danger—for He well knows I felt anything but cold or calm—am I, in all probability, alive to tell this tale. Suffice, after considerable parley, great humiliation on my part, some forbearance and unheard-of vociferation on that of my enemies, the leader seemed to be convinced that I had had no share in the upsetting of his sledges, or the merchandise which lay strewed on the snow; and I must do him the justice to say, that when thus convinced—confining himself to unmitigated threats and oaths, which he launched at the head of my driver, but which were to be put into practical execution on some future day—he called his men together, and after Herculean efforts, extracted my half-buried sledge and horses from the snow, dragged it past his caravan, and sent me on my way rejoicing.

"I fancy," added Colonel Crampton, "it would be very difficult, even for you who have now passed through this dense forest—for most happily we are approaching the open, and the snow is falling less heavily, and the night clearing)—to realize my position. Nevertheless, not in the slightest degree have I exaggerated the simple facts—indeed, scarcely told you half my sufferings—though to those accustomed to travel on the safe high and bye-ways of our God-protected island it might appear as a mere dream of imagination, or a fiction. Having given half-a-dozen roubles to the Polish seir, and a dozen more to the merchant's serfs, who were all as desirous to kiss my feet on parting as they had been previously to break my head, I remounted my sledge, saw the miserable animal in human form, my postilion, take his place before me, and away we went again as fast as had a pack of wolves been on our track—I cared not how fast, so be we left the forest behind us, and reached the next post-house. Clear of the forest, I returned the whip to my driver, and trying to calm myself—first thanking God for my safe deliverance, and feeling, perhaps,

a lighter heart than I had ever experienced before—self and despatches safe, I pursued my way rejoicing. True, I had much still to fear, for I was literally in a warm or vapour bath; the perspiration streamed from my head to feet, but I dared not cast aside my heavy furs, for the night was bitter, and had I done so I might have been frozen to death, after an escape from murder. However, we reached the next post-house safely, and, instead of saying a word in expostulation, I paid my postilion, doubtless to his great surprise, double the usual donation. Fresh horses were harnessed in a trice to my sledge, my only object being to get forward—and it was evident my new driver had been informed of my liberality, for the little horses actually flew. I have often since thought, in calmer moments, what might have been the sequel had the heavy cudgel of the leader of the sledge-drivers chanced to have fallen on the head, instead of the shoulder, of my postilion. Possibly I should have been robbed, and then deserted in that dark forest to watch over his corpse till daylight returned, or have perished myself; if not, I should have been accused of murdering him, with no possible evidence to the contrary.

“A Russian official, travelling as I was travelling, on his arrival at St. Petersburg—which I reached without further mishap—would instantly have reported the whole story most minutely to the authorities; the postilion would probably have been subject to the knout, then sent on a trip to Siberia—his wife and family, if he had them, left to starve at home. For what? For having just imbibed that which many pleasant gentlemen are wont to imbibe over a cheerful fireside, in a snug arm-chair, previous to turning into a four-poster—just one glass too much grog; or, if you will it, *racci*. Moreover, he would have been most considerably licked by the traveller himself, without an effort to retaliate, inasmuch as previous to the emancipation of serfs (I do not know if a similar practice prevails in the day we live, though my mishap occurred as it were but yesterday), no Russian traveller of any position considered it necessary to waste words on those who were looked on—though men with hearts and souls to be saved—otherwise than as mere beasts of burden; consequently, a whack over the head from a thick stick simply meant ‘drive faster!’ or a kick from a thick boot, ‘why did you not stop?’ However, English gentlemen and officers are, happily, brought up in a different school; consequently, save to my selected friends, I never till now have told the tale of that fearful night, the memory of which is not the less engraven on my heart; and all I hope is, that the poor fellow who shared those bitter hours in the snow still lives to drive, and measures more carefully his potations—though I greatly fear me, or I read badly the face of man, he was marked out for the vengeance of that athletic merchant, if so be one jot of his belongings were injured by the upsetting of his sledges.

“But the night is now clearing. Look, how dreary is the landscape! We must halt for half an hour at the next post-house, and I hope reach

Dunaborgh by mid-day. Are you inclined for a nap? Good! It will refresh us, and then I will tell you a little *historiette* of a totally different nature, which was related to me when on a sporting excursion from St. Petersburg."

"A thousand thanks," I replied; "you have already caused this fearful night to slip through. I now most clearly see your duties are far from being free from dangers and difficulties. Your conduct in the very unpleasant affair, in the details of which you have just so greatly interested me, whether dictated by a higher power or your own moral courage, was most discreet, and doubtless was the only means of safety."

"Well," said the Colonel, as we now glided over the frozen road ten miles an hour, with a clear sky and bright sun above, after having had a good nap and a refreshing wash at the post-house, "you shall have my tale of the Russian Village Doctor. It is a strange, but nevertheless a true one. Meanwhile, I must admit I hold the faculty, more particularly those hard-working members called country practitioners, in great respect. Doubtless there are many among them (I speak with reference to our native land) who are alike ignorant and ill-educated. It can scarcely be so, however, in the present day, considering the severe examinations they have to pass, and the advance of science. For my own part, I have met with very many whose kindness and unselfish Christian bearing, alike to poor as rich, were beyond all praise, while the public are oft-times most hard upon them—overwhelming them with wordy gratitude and thanks while suffering, cavilling at their hard-earned charges when free from pain and called on to pay them. Moreover, the curse—I always call it the curse—of fashion prevails even over a sick-bed. The best, the cleverest, the kindest of village practitioners may be left unnoticed and in poverty, though selected by what are supposed to be educated and Christian men to watch over the poor, while the village squire, or the over-dressed, half educated, rich farmer's daughter sends to the neighbouring town, some ten miles off, for Dr. Potash—the doctor in fashion—till such time as the squire is brought home on a shutter from the hunting-field with his leg broken, or Miss Wilhelmina has a fit from tight-lacing. Then Jones is thought good enough to set the leg, or recover the fit, till Potash can arrive—in fact, do that which, if well done, as it generally is, enables Potash to complete the cure, pocket the fees, and get the credit of poor Jones's ability.

"However, I was about to tell you that, finding I had had an idle week to spare in the City of the Czar, and being a keen sportsman, I was induced to join a shooting party to the interior, many versts from the capital. The season was late autumn time, perhaps the most unhealthy in Russia, and on our return to a small town, where there was a decent inn, I found myself so unwell that I determined to remain for a few days, leaving my companion to proceed homewards. Towards evening, indeed, I felt so ill that, hearing there was a surgeon in the place, I sent for him, and in half an hour the good man stood before

me. He was a small, dry, rather good-looking man, with bright mild eyes, and peculiarly gentle, both in his manner and his treatment. Having promised to send me a draught or a tonic—it mattereth little which—and informed me I was merely suffering from over-fatigue, exposure to wet and cold, and the excitement consequent on the sport we had had, and that I should be able to proceed in a day or two, I was about to offer him a fee—such, poor man, as he rarely touched—when something in his manner and bearing, and melancholy expression of countenance, induced me, being alone, and glad of a companion who might possibly give me some information about the neighbourhood, to ask him to sit down by the smoking zomovar which had been placed on the table, and share my tea—an invitation which the good man gladly accepted; and, after much pleasant conversation about the place, people, and more particularly as to the nature of his duties as a medical man, in the strange place in which I found myself, he related the following tale, which I shall tell, as far as memory permits, in his own words:—

“One bitter Russian winter’s night I was sitting with the village mayor and a few other friends, snugly by the side of the stove, playing a hand of cards, to which amusement we Russians are much addicted, when a messenger arrived with a letter, as he said, from a lady. I broke the seal, and, true enough, the contents informed me that the writer’s beloved daughter was on the point of death. She had sent her carriage and horses, and entreated my instant presence. My companions laughed at my discomfiture—said the night was fine—(it was terrible—and they warm and at home)—that a carriage awaited me—my ride would be agreeable—and money (horrid money) to be made by my labours; and this, perhaps, with the more gusto that I was on the point of winning about half a dozen copecks when obliged to throw down my cards. However, I knew it was my duty to go, and go at once; so I wrapped myself up, and bidding my companions good night, with a vain attempt to smile, hurried away, through a keen wind and drifting snow, to my humble home and stock of medicines. The daughter was dying, her beloved daughter—whose daughter?—that I knew not, but I must go—and go at once; through slippery, half frozen half wet streets, on that dark and dismal and, to me, never-to-be-forgotten night.

“Now, dear Sir,” said the doctor—wiping away, as I justly thought, a tear, “recollect we are in Russia, not in England, of which noble country I have read much, if so be, to my regret, I have never seen it. A cold drive on a winter’s night of twenty miles across country, when called suddenly from your warm bed or a happy home circle, even with the chance of being well paid for your discomfort, is not the most agreeable phase in the life of a country practitioner. But here, Sir, in Russia, it requires courage, and physical, not to say mental, endurance, which you can scarcely realize, even to the dwellers on the soil. Moreover, the very nature of our lives causes us to be keen observers. Therefore, when I reached my home, and beheld—not

what you would term a carriage with a well-dressed coachman on the box, with his hat firmly placed on his head, and two good horses, with a knowledge that the owner was rich in this world's goods and could pay me for my trouble, but in lieu thereof a sort of open cart without springs, which we call a 'telega,' filled with straw, to which were harnessed with ropes two small horses with coats like bears, and a miserable object to drive me, sitting that bitter night uncovered, in serfdom respect, I own my heart sank within me; the more so when he informed me he had twenty-five versts, or about twenty English miles, to travel across country roads, or rather, beaten tracts, as you would more justly term them.

"Suffice, I gathered together such restoratives as I deemed might be required, and resigning myself to the straw, we started. I will pass over all the physical sufferings I endured that fearful boisterous night of mid-winter—they were indeed soon erased from memory by more poignant heart-sickness. At length we arrived before a house which you probably would term in your own country a small farm-stead, the roof thatched. There were lights, however, in the window, and I saw we were anxiously awaited. I had scarce time to descend from the vehicle, with my limbs all bruised and stiff, ere an aged but respectable woman rushed to the door, and, without welcoming me, cried aloud in her agony, 'Save her, doctor! Oh save my poor child, she is dying!' 'Calm yourself, madam,' I replied, though I had much difficulty to calm myself, for I was more dead than alive with cold. 'Where is my patient!'

"On this I was led into a clean little room, where I beheld an old nurse crouched up in a corner; and on a bed, in a state of utter unconsciousness, lay a young woman, perhaps twenty years of age, in a high fever, breathing with difficulty. Two other young persons, her sisters, sat by her side in tears. 'Yesterday,' said they, 'she was apparently well: she had eaten with appetite. This morning only she complained of a headache, and you now see she is delirious with fever.'

"'Calm yourselves, ladies,' I again observed. I then approached the bed, bled her and mixed her a draught. While thus using the best means medical science dictated, I had time to closely observe my fever-stricken patient; and neither before nor since in my life have I beheld so lovely a woman. I was struck dumb with unexplainable emotion; indeed, I felt at the moment she would not, she could not, live; and yet how sad, for one so young in years—so beautiful. Happily, she fell off into a calm sleep, and I had the happiness to observe my aid was so far effectual. I then took the usual precaution of recommending perfect quiet; and leaving the nurse to watch, retired for a short time with the mother and her daughters, giving orders that I should be called if she awoke. I did my utmost to calm them, assuring them, almost against conviction, I had strong hopes of her recovery. At length, they left me to repose on a sofa. Fatigued as I was, however, sleep was out of the question. I could not banish that lovely face from my thoughts. I felt no power of man could

save her; yet I was determined, vain mortal as I was, to do my utmost to bring her back to life and health. The hours of another day had arrived, though not the light which cheers—which is late in this northern clime. I then opened my door with great care, and stole softly into her room, which was next to that in which I had sought repose. The nurse was sleeping soundly, with her mouth open, and snoring loudly. My patient had her lovely face turned towards me, beautiful even in her sufferings; and her arms were stretched forth as if to embrace some one. On my approach, she instantly opened her eyes; and with a nervous tremour, said, 'Who are you? who are you?' With some confusion, I replied, 'I am the medical man from the adjacent town, sent for by your mother to do you good. I have already bled you.' You must try and sleep; and in a few days we shall have you round again.' 'Oh! yes. Oh! yes. The doctor, I understand. Do not let me die yet! Oh! do not let me die!' I tried to console her; but, alas, my words fell deceitfully from my lips. Save her, with God's aid, I was determined, in aught that my medical skill would effect; but I saw plain enough, from the very first, it was no common fever—such fever, mental as well as bodily, that had attacked her; and each day confirmed me in this opinion. At times she rallied—rallied only to convince me that her heart and disposition were as beautiful as her person; and still more so, to convince me—(pardon me, Sir, I was then a very young man, though I blush to acknowledge the fact)—to assure me, that I daily loved her with a more overwhelming passion; indeed—must I confess it?—I felt almost as delirious in my love as did the poor stricken girl in her fever. From the very first I had determined to remain with the family till the worst was over, or that I could restore cheerfulness to the home, where I soon became as one of the family. I knew that it was my duty to return to —, for I had other patients who required my services. But in some measure the elements aided in stilling my conscience, and holding me faster in chains of deep affection towards my patient. Heavy falls of snow cut off for the time almost all communication with the town; I had even great difficulty, by bribes and threats, to induce any one to return for the medicines I actually required. Meantime, I took the part of doctor, nurse, and friend, by day as by night, regardless of rest. I tended her with unremitting care—a care which gave me for ever the love of those who loved her, and whom she loved, and in the intervals of reason she saw it and felt it.

"A week had already elapsed, when, one evening, as we sat round her bed, reason appeared to me to be so much restored, that hope touched my heart against all my professional convictions—and I ventured to express that hope, with a smile and cheerful words—that the worst had passed. As I was thus speaking to her poor mother, she turned and fell into a calm slumber. My hopes became stronger still; and having again expressed them, I urged on all to retire to rest. Even the old nurse, worn

out by watching, was induced to seek her bed, while I firmly declared I would be her sole attendant that night. With this intent, when all had left the room, I sat me down by her bed-side, and watching the sweet youthful face with untold anguish, I endeavoured to reason with myself, and pray that all might yet be well. Vain hope! no sooner experienced than crushed for ever.

"It might have been about one in the morning. All was silent in the house, while, without, the snow fell heavily, when, with a deep-drawn sigh, she opened her beautiful eyes, and with perfect consciousness, and as I then thought, almost free from fever, she put out her small white hand in mine, and asked if we were alone.

"Having replied in the affirmative, she said in a few gentle words, 'Then let me thank you, dear friend, while yet there is time, for all your unremitting care. Die I shall; you know it well: and while reason is mine, let me tell you I have no desire to live.'

"In my madness—yes, Sir, in the madness of a passion far beyond my self-control—I threw myself on my knees by her bed-side, and covering her hand with kisses, declared she must not, should not die, but live to return the deep love I bore her. Indeed, I scarcely know what I did or said, save that I asserted to myself a power which belongs alone to God: and He justly punished me.

"'You love me!' she said. 'Alas, that it should be so! for you merit to the full all the love I have to give you in return. But it is too late—too late. My hours are numbered; yet I believe in your love, and might have valued it. I will prove my words by telling you all: here, let me put my lips to your ear, while you listen to all my sadness, and then say if life has any charms for me. Kiss me! yes, kiss me if you will! It is many a kiss I owe you for your kindness and affection—many a kiss I owe you for the sorrow of heart you will endure when I am gone—if you really love me.'

"If," exclaimed the poor Doctor—turning towards me, and again, as I thought, wiping away a tear—"if! Do I not love her memory now as ever, though years have passed away? And then came the sad, but too frequent tale—whether a Russian prince or an English noble be the cause. There lived in their immediate neighbourhood a young Russian of rank and wealth; that is to say, he was wont occasionally to visit his vast estates, receive his rents, sport, bully his serfs, and return to the capitals of Russia, England, or France, to spend them. He had seen the beautiful girl, my patient—wooed, won, seduced, and deserted her; and some kind friend, in total ignorance of harm, on the very morning she was taken ill—(for bad news flies fast in Russia, as elsewhere)—had descanted on the brilliant marriage which had recently taken place at St. Petersburg, between the young and handsome Count —, their neighbour and landlord, and the lovely Miss De —, daughter of the French Ambassador. Need I say more? In the gladness of one heart, often, may be found the death-blow of another.

"After the wretched night I have endeavoured briefly to describe, my poor patient's reason appeared to be perfectly restored, but I well knew she was sinking fast—that no skill of mine could save her; and my agony was great. The week had nearly closed, another Sabbath was at hand, when we gathered again round her sick-bed—mother and sisters, and I, whom they now looked on alike as son and brother—for had I not done my all to save her they so dearly prized? Alas! how selfish had been all my unremitting care—and what availed it? From the calmness she displayed, and the clearness of her words, though feebly uttered, those of her home clung to the belief that the worst was over, and that a bright morrow would dawn on the stricken household. I dared not undeceive them, though, alas! I knew too well the hour of death was at hand. Midnight was approaching—and I was about to urge on all that she should be left to repose, when, raising her beautiful and enfeebled form in her bed, she spoke in words scarce audible, as follows: 'Dear mother, dear sisters, come nigh and kiss me, and listen to what I say. May God bless you for all your love, and pardon all my enemies.' Then taking a ring from her emaciated finger, she called me to her side, and, placing it on mine, bid those around her bear witness, that, had she lived, she would have done all to make my journey on earth a joyous one, by sharing my sorrows as my joys.

"Another day had scarcely dawned ere she died in my arms, as tranquil as a child—leaving me, Sir, unmarried, but a widower in all but my undying love, and, I would hope, devotion to the sufferings of those who come under my professional care."

"I quitted that poor broken-hearted village practitioner with feelings of respect and friendship a few days subsequently, with great difficulty inducing him to take my offered fee, and sincere hope we might meet again. Rarely have I met with one so simple, yet so true and skilful, and withal, surpassing modest, in his demeanour."

But see, the gilded dome of St. Isaac is glittering in the distance—in half an hour we shall set foot in the capital of all the Russias. You have now performed a Russian journey—and can give your friends at home some practical experience of the road-side. My Black Bag contains many another tale of the sunny south—Italy, Spain, France and Austria—and if those you have already heard have caused you aught of interest, you may hear them on some future day.

PAUL BRADBURN'S STORY:

TOLD IN CALIFORNIA.

FAR, far away from the shores of merry old England, I, Arthur Helsingham, sat before the door of that elegant, commodious, and otherwise desirable messuage or tenement, my own Log-house, in California. It was Sunday evening; but I had not been to church, simply because there was no church to go to; and if any kind philanthropist had benevolently sent us one of those iron churches, so useful and so justly appreciated in that wild El Dorado of the nineteenth century, I am sure that nothing short of a miracle could have produced anything like a congregation, since, stretching the limits of our possible parish, to the furthest degree, there would have been found only five human parishioners: and of these but three were good churchmen viz., myself; an English youth named Paul Bradburn, who lived higher up the mountains, in one of the gorges; and another person whom it is unnecessary to specify, as he does not appear at all in the course of my story. Of the other two whom parochial legislation might have adopted, one was an austere Roman Catholic, an old Spanish woman, called Dolores—I do not know whether she had any other name; and the other an American, a most rigid and entirely uncompromising Nonconformist!

Nevertheless, I had had my own service after my usual fashion. Nature had provided me with a cathedral of wondrous extent and magnificence. The spot which I had chosen for my sanctuary, and where every Sunday I read in solitude the Service of my Church, was a nearly circular glade or opening, in the depths of a magnificent forest. Mosses—crimson, green, olive and amber: lycopodiums of loveliest emerald hue, and rich with their own peculiar glaucous-like bloom; flowers of exquisite beauty and of purest fragrance, served me instead of a tessellated pavement. All around, like airy pinnacles and graceful shafts, shot up the tall pines and arrowy cypresses, and my dome was the deep azure concave of the great sky. And from this central space diverged five long shadowy aisles, with here and there the golden-green light falling through the thickly-woven branches of the giant trees, and casting into deeper gloom the solemn, silent shades, where ray of sun, or moon, or star might never penetrate. Never was minster-aisle more awfully grand, more thrillingly beautiful.

"Mighty shades,

Weaving their gorgeous tracery o'er my head,
With the light melting through their high arcades
As through a pillar'd cloisters. But the dead
Slept not beneath, nor did the sunbeam pass
To marble shrines through rainbow-tinted glass;
Yet I—by fount and forest murmur led
To worship—I, was blest! To me was shown
Earth in her holy pomp, decked for her God alone."

Well; so much for my Californian Cathedral, where I was at once—and alone—priest, and chorister, and worshipper! Then I sat near my own threshold, and I was thinking—as one very far from the beloved land of his birth and his kindred is prone to think, in the gorgeous sunset of a quiet Sunday evening! The valley in which I had made my home was 2,500 feet above the level of the Pacific; it was nearly two miles in length, and of nearly the same width; and it was belted almost continuously with groves of the black oak and the yellow or pitch pine. To the south was a hill of comparative insignificance, but impenetrably wooded; on the west were lofty snow-crowned peaks, wearing at that sunset hour dazzling coronals of flaming gold—monarchs of the mighty Cordillera chain; and on the east, sheer up from my quiet green valley, rose a dark scarred precipice of at least 2,000 feet, and beyond that was the white spectral brow of a long-extinct volcano. To the north was the forest, which enclosed the verdurous aisles and transepts of my vast cathedral!

Higher up the spurs of the mountains, and above the oaks and pines that skirted the vale, were forests of the sugar-pine, and hoary, monstrous cedars, their huge limbs covered and curtained with moss; and it is in this belt that the groves of "Big Trees" occur. There are as yet, I believe, but three of the groves discovered—one in Calaveras County, one in my own neighbourhood, and one in Fresno County. These sylvan monsters are, many of them, larger than the one whose bark was stripped off and sent to England for exhibition in the Sydenham Palace; and there are few, if any of them, of an altitude less than three hundred feet. Competent botanists pronounce them over three thousand years old. But, oh! confusion seize the Vandal who conferred upon these patriarchal giants of a primeval world the hideous name of "*Wellingtonia Gigantea*!" But all this has nothing to do with the singular story I am about to relate. Gradually, as I mused upon things past and present, I found myself recalling, with mingled pleasure and sadness, a circumstance that occurred just before I quitted England for the Western world. It was the close of the Birmingham Musical Festival, which all the world knows is held triennially, and generally, if I mistake not, in the last week of August, or the first week of September. The date of the year was 1846. It was the evening of an unusually hot and brilliant day. That morning and the preceding evening I had spent in the Town Hall, listening to strains so glorious, so instinct with immortal melody, that till the day of death I shall remember with wonder and exultation those hours of rapt and awed delight! Nay, more: *I* believe they will not be forgotten in the other world!

I had heard Mendelssohn performing on the powerful organ—of which Birmingham is so intensely and so justly proud; and it seemed to me as if the glad instrument rang out joyfully to the touch of the mighty master. I heard him play the "*Sanctus*," from Beethoven's "*Mass in C*;" the "*Hallelujah Chorus*" (Handel); and the "*Death Chant*," from the opera

of "Lucrezia Borgia." The manner in which he brought in the great opheiclide stop, then, if not now, unequalled in any organ in the world, was unanimously granted to be beyond all previous conception, and beyond all praise. And it is of this same gifted Mendelssohn that my strange tale comes.

I was returning from the swimming-baths in the lower part of the town; and, beguiled by the extraordinary beauty of the evening, I felt unwilling to return home. About half-past eight I reached the piazzas of the Town Hall, where a Grand Dress Ball was about to commence—the said ball being the rather incongruous finale of the programme of the Festival. The piazzas were crowded with people of all ranks and all ages, and, as a certain Milesian sagely remarked, of *all* sexes; they were striving to catch glimpses of the splendour in which they were not permitted to share. But I had already seen finery enough in the shop windows to satisfy me for the whole term of my natural life; and, after the classic music of the Oratorios and the Operas, I shuddered at the idea of the "Caledonians" or the "Redowa Polka," though sustained by the finest band in Christendom; and not caring to mix myself up with this *omnium gatherum* of sight-seers and policemen, I crossed the road, where the Peel statue now stands, and took up my position on the lower steps of that sacred building of unmitigated ugliness and bad taste, commonly known as Christ Church, or the Free Church of Birmingham.

Ignoring the heavy portico, the sturdy steeple, and the warehouse-like windows of the highly-respectable building behind me, I fixed my regards on the façade of the Town Hall, silvered as it was by the soft, clear rays of the brilliant full moon. I thought then that this English Parthenon needed only completion to render it the most beautiful secular *modern* building in the world. I think so still, though I have seen, since those days, the Gerard College of Philadelphia, U. S., built of dazzling white marble. Long I lingered, gazing on the grey mass, as it rose against a serene and mellow sky, with its long rows of pillars, thin fluted shafts, and beauteous capitals. I marvelled to find so much beauty in the very heart of a busy, smoky, manufacturing town!

At length, roused by the striking of Christ Church clock, I ran down to the bottom of the church area; and thence, stepping upon the sidewalk, I encountered a small man, wrapped in a heavy cloak—curiously heavy for the time of the year and for such an evening—who ran tilt up against me, and would inevitably have had a serious fall had I not caught him in my arms. He thanked me profusely, in fair English, but with an unmistakable Teutonic accent; and he and I walked together down New Street, to the Hen and Chickens Hotel, where he came to a halt, and where, as I had already gone out of my way and must retrace my steps, I also paused to bid him good night. But he would not part with me so quickly. "We must pledge each other in a cup of wine," he said, "before we make our farewells." And entering the hotel, he called for "Johannis-

berger," that liquor of good repute, from Prince Metternich's own gardens on the kingly Rhine! We drank standing, in a dimly-lighted room; I wondering almost painfully who my host might be, and haunted all the while with a dim recollection of having seen his face before. That he was no common man I was well aware--his first words had impressed me with reverence and admiration.

We were exchanging adieus under the well-known portico of the hotel, when the moon, which had been obscured behind a silvery cloud from the moment of our meeting, suddenly emerged into the pure ether, and shone out with redoubled brilliancy and power. I knew him then! I knew my host. I knew that glorious Oriental head! It was Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, the great composer, the master-genius of the nineteenth century!

While these reminiscences passed through my mind, I seemed to see once more the noble Hall--the busy streets of the thronged town; and, above all, in the fair and mellow moonlight, the pale, clear-cut face of the mighty master! all so far removed from me now by time and by space--even by the shadows of the tomb--and so distinct from the blackening forests that stretched around my lonely home--from the dim mountain-passes and the snowy peaks of the stupendous Cordilleras.

The twilight had fallen, and the stars were shedding their soft, lustrous splendour over the lonely world. One planet burned large and red over the awful brow of the precipice. Two voices broke the stillness of the hour: the deep, low murmur of the woods, and the booming sound of the cataract. I was going in to light my lamp, when I heard my name spoken. It was the American before referred to; and he had been absent all day nursing a sick friend, high up in one of the passes that diverged from the valley where I lived.

"Are you tired, Mr. Helsingham?" inquired my companion, before I could accost him.

"Not at all! Why do you ask?"

"Why, you are wanted up yonder," pointing in the direction whence he had come. "That poor fellow there is dying; he's fixed to go off before morning, you'll see; and he seems to fancy your company considerable. He says you're his countryman, and you must close his eyes, and say something to him at the last, that will make him think of the old country. I told him I'd go and fetch you right away!"

"I'll come this minute," I replied. "The starlight is clear enough for anything, even if we did not know the paths, as we do. Just wait till I get my rifle."

In three minutes we were on our way; and after an hour and a half's hard walking, we reached our destination--a lovely plateau, nearly 2,000 feet higher than the elevation from which we had started. Our sick friend was listening for us: he was tended only by the ancient female Spaniard, Dolores, who was earnestly imploring him to abjure his heretical tenets

ere it was too late. To my unpractised eye—for I had never before seen a death of slow decay—he seemed better; his voice was clearer, and his clasp less feeble. I did not know that the lamp of mortal life sometimes burns most brilliantly just ere it is extinguished. I thought he might linger yet for some time; but I was wrong—the days of Paul Bradburn's exile were over! And from his lips—the lips of a man who *knew* he had reached the confines of Time, and who was looking calmly and trustfully into the great Eternity—I heard the story, which I desire to relate simply and faithfully, as it was confided to me by my dying friend, in that most solemn hour.

The American, and Dolores, had withdrawn, leaving me to the night-watch. First of all, he desired me to write certain letters to certain people, after his decease, and to forward certain papers and properties to his friends in England. Also, he requested me to bury him under the shade of a certain cedar, in a little valley close by, and to read over his remains the Burial Service of the English Church.

All this being settled and agreed upon, I besought him to sleep; but instead of composing himself, he went on talking quietly and affectionately of his kindred on the other side of the Atlantic, whom he might meet no more, till they should clasp hands in the spirit world! He spoke too of his boyhood—of London Streets—of the pleasant Temple Gardens, and the ancient Temple Church, of which his father had been one of the vergers.

Of that venerable sanctuary he said much, and seemed to dwell on the subject with a lingering, wistful tenderness, as if every stone of the stately old pile were associated with the story of his young life. At length he said suddenly—"Helsingham, did you ever see Mendelssohn?"

I started, and replied that I had. The inquiry moved me strangely;—perhaps because my last thoughts, apart from my dying friend, had been concentrated on the memory of our brief intercourse fourteen years ago in the busy Birmingham streets!

"Did *you* ever see him—ever speak with him?" I inquired in my turn.

A strange expression came over his wasted features, as he answered in low, distinct, solemn tones, "Ay! *that I have!* And with him, what did I not see? It was strange—an awful *mystery!* But I shall soon know all about it!"

"What mystery?—What shall you know?—What did you see?" I asked, half awed, and half wondering, at his singular tone and look.

"Listen," he replied, "and I will tell you. I have never disclosed it before; I could not bear to narrate the facts that I will now no longer conceal from you, lest my story should meet with incredulity or ridicule. But *you* will not doubt me, and you will not tell me I dreamed; oh, no!—it was true and real; no fancy, no overwrought phantom of a fevered brain! I can see them now as I saw them then, long, long ago, when I was a youth—a mere lad of nineteen!"

"See them now?" I said, looking involuntarily round.

"Only with 'my mind's eye,'" he returned. "My fast failing vision discerns only these familiar walls and your kind English face! But listen! You know that my father was a verger of the Temple Church; and it is widely known that the organ of that church is an instrument of singular power, and sweetness, and capability. And it was Mendelssohn's great delight to play upon it; he saying frequently, in my hearing, that it was the most musical and richest toned organ in Europe!

"One afternoon my father being too sick to attend to his duties, I was expected to take his place; I had often done so before, and I knew every nook and cranny of the great church as well as I know my poor little log-house here, where I have lived these three years, and where I am now spending the last hours of my life! The afternoon service was over, and Mendelssohn, who had strolled in at the prayer of St. Chrysostom, went up into the organ-loft and began playing. The Vicars-Choral gave orders that he should not be disturbed; and, as my father was the person then responsible for the keys, I remained to close the doors when Mendelssohn should choose to take his departure. I sat a long time, till it grew quite dark; and then feeling rather dreary, all alone in the body of the huge old church, I thought I would go up to Mendelssohn. Besides, I was curious to know how he managed to play in the dark, and I half suspected he must have a private taper of his own. Even as I ascended the gallery stairs, it struck me that I was listening to the most extraordinary and glorious music that mortal ears ever heard!

"Often the midnight wind in the pine forests here has made me think of the floods of sound that rolled through the arches of that dark, lonely church, in that never-to-be-forgotten hour! As I went higher the chords rang out fuller and deeper, blended with such celestial harmony as might befit the choruses of Heaven, and when I reached the organ-loft there was Mendelssohn—I could just trace the outline of his figure—playing away in the darkness, like one inspired! Moreover, he rejected my offer of bringing him lights: he went on, and the music swelled in great waves of melody—higher and louder, and grander!—till I wondered whether he were mortal man, or an archangel from the choirs above.

"Suddenly, as I stood close by the mighty musician, I became aware of a dusky, yellow light, pervading the church—or I think, at first, only a part of the church; and looking down in my surprise I saw—nay, don't tell me I *thought* I saw—I *did* see—a double line of men drawn up in solid column, each one clad in a long white cloak or mantle, and each one with a heavy red cross on his breast. Starting at so strange and unaccountable a sight, I rushed back to the key-board, which I had left for the moment, and seizing Mendelssohn unceremoniously by the arm, I called his attention to the ghostly procession in the body of the church. To my surprise, and not at all to my comfort, Felix, leaving the organ, drew me to the front of the gallery, or loft, and gazing down upon the multitude

that now seemed to throng the aisles of the ancient fane, said, 'Ay, I know them! I have seen them before. They are the Crusaders, the men who fought and died for the tomb of our dear dead and risen Lord!' (Mendelssohn, you know, lived and died in the Christian faith.) 'And there is nothing strange in what we now see. It is not strange that the old defenders of Jerusalem should rise from their quiet sleep when the last of the Royal House of David makes the church ring and echo, as if the son of Jesse, even in our day, laid the evil spirit that troubled Saul.'

"And then, for a minute or more, Felix was quiet; while all the time the yellow light increased, and the thick dusky crowd in the body of the church grew larger and larger; till at length, emerging from the mass, there stepped forward a man of gigantic height, with a noble mien, and an immense dark flowing beard. Then the voice of Mendelssohn rang out—'Godfrey of Bouillon! stormer of Ascalon, first on the walls of Jerusalem, what do you here? *You are no Templar!*'

"I saw no more, and I heard no more; but half an hour afterwards, when I awoke from a swoon, Mendelssohn was throwing water on my head and face, and there was no light in the vast church, save that which the glimmering of his candle afforded. He knew the ways of the place, and he had found both taper and water for my benefit. As soon as full consciousness returned, I remembered all that had taken place; and shudderingly, I appealed to my companion to assure me that the spectral army no longer occupied the body of the church, through which we must necessarily pass on our way to the outer world. He replied, that there was no one now in the church save ourselves; and he advised me to be silent as to what I had witnessed. I replied, that I would never mention it to any one: and he thanked me with that singular urbanity which was so peculiarly one of his characteristics; concluding with—'at least, not during my life,—afterwards it will not matter; and very soon ——' He broke off abruptly, and I concluded that he anticipated his own speedy demise.

"We spoke further on the subject; but as I cannot pretend now faithfully to record our conversation, and as I desire to omit nothing and to exaggerate nothing, I will not try to repeat it. After a while we closed the organ and went down stairs. I tried to be calm and brave; but my limbs trembled, my heart palpitated, and my whole body was bathed in a chilly sweat, as we passed along, arm in arm, through the very aisles where the ghostly columns had been, erewhile, drawn up. I was glad when the key was turned in the outer door; and I took care never again to be left alone in the ancient church of the Templars. The noise of the streets, the gaslights, and the fresh evening breeze, revived me; and soon Mendelssohn and I parted, never to meet again on earth. He went his way, and I went mine; he to die in his own beloved *Vater land*, and I—But you know my story, Helsingham—I came here to these gorgeous wilds to find my last resting-place beneath the cedars. Well; no matter!

it will be all one at the great rising day—all one—cathedral cloisters, depths of the sea, village churchyard, or Californian solitudes."

When the sun shone full and red on the icy peaks of the eastern mountains, Paul Bradburn was dead! English hands closed his eyes—English hands laid him in his quiet, solitary grave!

I should have liked to bury him in the green cloisters of my forest-cathedral, but he had chosen the cedar-shade; and there I laid the turfs on his breast, after reading over his uncoffined remains the Burial Service of the English Church.

And now, I have nothing further to add. I have related the facts exactly as I received them from the lips of my dying friend—"I tell the tale as 'twas told to me"—confessing, however, most fully and unreservedly, that I believe every word of the whole marvellous story, feeling positive, in my own mind, that Paul Bradburn was neither deceiving, nor deceived; neither under any illusion, nor seeking to delude others; but speaking, in that most solemn hour, the hour of death, the simple, unvarnished and unmitigated *truth*. Any attempt of mine to convince the readers of this Magazine of the veracity of Paul Bradburn's story would be, I am aware, equally futile and out of place. I hold my own opinion, and I leave it to them to form theirs.

Had Paul Bradburn wished to invent a supernatural romance, or had I desired to round off my story to a thrilling climax, it would have been easy to carry on the tale to a far higher pitch, instead of closing it thus succinctly and abruptly. I have nothing more to say.

THE CHAUSSEY ISLANDS.

BY D. T. ANSTED, F.R.S.

THIS singular group of islands is situated in the bay formed by the coast of Brittany and the promontory of Normandy called the Cotentin. The distance from the Rock of Granville is about eight miles; and from Cancale, nine. From Jersey the distance is about 28 miles. The group forms a complete archipelago; the rocks and islands being included within an irregular area measuring $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles from east to west, and five miles from north to south. The largest island, called La Grande Ile, is the furthest to the South, and is the only one of any importance.

Approaching these islands from Granville, the effect is very singular. At first, one is inclined to suppose that a continuous wall of rock forms a kind of natural breakwater, ranging parallel to the main land of France, opposite Granville; but a nearer approach dissipates this notion.

The rocks and islands are none of them high; but they are so regularly broken as to give an idea of battlements in a ruined state. Approaching them more nearly, openings are seen between them, and the apparent wall resolves itself into a chain of islets, so closely grouped as hardly to admit of more than small boats to pass between them. The rocks stretch along in a nearly straight line, and deep water exists immediately outside; so that, with due attention to tides and currents, one may sail very near them. When seen from a very short distance, their structure and nature are clearly recognized. They are, without exception, broken masses of granitic rock, rising slightly above the sea-level, and worn by water and atmospheric action so as to assume highly picturesque, and even grotesque, forms. On some of them are little striped towers; on others, masts; and on others, heaps of stones—all artificial objects, serving as sea-marks. On two or three of the larger are ruined huts—miserable habitations—serving as a temporary shelter for one or two persons, when, during summer, a few sheep or cattle are pastured upon the tufty vegetation that grows on the spot. Some blades of coarse grass mixed with a large proportion of broom and brambles seem to be the pasture afforded.

Nearing the principal island, several of the smaller ones are seen very picturesquely grouped to the east of it; and as we enter the channel that separates that island from the others, the effect is exceedingly striking. A number of rocks are seen dotted about in a semi-circle, almost as if placed artificially. A narrow and nearly concealed passage exists, but is hardly noticeable; and up to the present time (September, 1860,) there has been no landing-place, pier, or port of any kind.

In order to examine the island, I landed on some masses of granite rock, covered with growing sea-weed, below the lighthouse. Both a pier and harbour are, however, in course of construction a little further on, in connection with extensive Government works already far advanced on the island. It is probable that, in another year, there will be greater facilities

for visiting the islands than now exist—unless the system of exclusion of foreigners from national defences should here prevail.

The Grande Ile de Chaussey, though hitherto not very remarkable, appears to be destined by the Imperial Government to be the scene of future glory to the French people; unless, indeed, nature should previously have found time to complete the work of destruction which has evidently been going on for ages, and which seems to have produced the whole Chaussey archipelago from a single island, not unlike Jersey in shape, of about half the area, and of similar mineral composition.

The Grande Ile is, at present, rather more than two miles in length; but its form is exceedingly irregular. I could only compare it to the appearance one sometimes sees of two or three ants walking in Indian file on a zigzag line, each having hold of the tail of its predecessor. The land consists of a number of low hummocks of rocky broken granite, whose tops and sides are tolerably green, except where the rock juts out, but which are separated by low hollows, some of which are, while many others are not, entirely covered at high-water. On the hummock nearest Granville is a lighthouse, and near it is being constructed a citadel of some strength. Below and between this hummock and the next are granite quarries, and a small harbour of refuge is being prepared. There is here ample depth of water, but hardly room for two vessels to ride. A third hummock has on it the ruins of an old castle, or fort, erected during the seventeenth century, probably on the site of a monastery abandoned in 1543. Near this spot, and between the two hills last described, is the principal cultivation of the island. There are a few houses and farm buildings, some enclosed fields, and an orchard. These indicate the extent to which cultivation had been carried a couple of years ago. Near this point also are some quarries, which yield a tough hornblendic granite of great beauty, and apparently of excellent quality. Fresh water is obtained from pools and small springs.

The inhabitants of the archipelago, congregated about this point as a centre, formerly amounted only to about a hundred; and the lord of the islands was very careful not to jeopardise any of his almost feudal rights by permitting land to pass out of his own possession. Lately, however, the Government has purchased all that was considered necessary for the public works; and there is a population amounting to nearly 800 labourers, lodged in buildings erected for the purpose, and requiring large supplies of all kinds. There is thus a certain amount of temporary traffic, which gives an air of life that would not naturally belong to this principal island. Besides the other buildings is a small chapel, of no architectural pretension, recently erected for the workpeople.

The remaining hummocks of the large island are more picturesque and less useful than those occupied by the various buildings referred to. On one of them a handsome granite building is in course of erection; but the others are altogether in a state of nature.

Wide-spreading bays covered with sand and broken shells, the sand consisting of decomposed granite, almost entirely separate the hillocks from each other. Some of these bays are large; and in one of them I was amused to see a canvass bathing-machine—a mark of civilization that has not yet reached many more-visited places. Others of the bays are covered by boulders rolled down from the hills adjacent, and the sandy beaches are frequently interrupted by detached hillocks of granite.

From the highest of the hills on this principal island an excellent view is obtained of the whole Chaussey Archipelago. At low-water, upwards of fifty distinct islands and rocks, of some size, may be counted. At high water the number does not exceed thirty. All are covered with sea-weed (*varech*, or *vraick*—the common *fucus vesiculosus* or bladder-wrack of our coasts) up to high-water mark; and above it they are either grey from the effects of weathering, or green from the lichens which cover them. At the top, between the loose blocks, is a growth of coarse grass, broom, and bramble. They vary in size, and slightly also in form; but there is little other remark to be made about them.

Although it may be convenient for the French, in time of war, to possess a defensible post and small harbour of refuge near the larger and more important islands belonging to England in this part of the Channel, there does not seem any possibility that the constructions at present contemplated can be of serious annoyance to England, or can interfere with any interests our country may possess. The whole group of islands and rocks is too small and too difficult of approach to be frequently resorted to by any but very small vessels. Privateers might, no doubt, run in under the guns of the fort, and a few gun-boats might be stationed there.

In former times, the larger islands of this group seem to have been more peopled than of late. Their name denotes their discovery by the Northmen, by whom they seem to have been occupied; and the fact of an abbey, or at least a religious house, being established on them, is a proof that they were once regarded as of some value. At one time hermits appear to have been the chief inhabitants, though we are not informed how they obtained food. The abbey dates from the time of Richard, the first Duke of Normandy, who is said to have made it a dependency of the Mont St. Michel. After various changes it was passed, in 1343, from the hands of the Benedictines to those of the Cordeliers, by Philip of Valois, then King of France. From this time for about two centuries it appears to have been at the height of its importance, the registry of the See of Coutances showing that three or four candidates for ordination were sent on each occasion from this establishment. The English, however, having twice pillaged the monks, they finally left their habitation in 1543. From that time for another century there are no records, and the islands and rocks were probably left in the possession of a few small proprietors, who could earn but a scanty subsistence. There appears, indeed, to have been a feudal lord so lately as the middle of the last century; but at the Revolu-

tion the right of ownership was made over to the State. It has since again become a private estate under the ordinary conditions of the law of France.

The chief vegetable productions of the Grande Ile are—poor hay, wheat, barley, and some other grains; and a few common fruits. There are a few sheep and horned cattle, moved from rock to rock as occasion serves; but the most profitable source of revenue is the granite, some of which is exceedingly beautiful, and which has been largely quarried. Sea weed grows abundantly on all the rocks, and is cut in August and dried for sale on the main land. Soda is also obtained from burning some of the weed. Iodine no doubt might be manufactured.

Formerly the rocky pools amongst these islands and on the adjacent banks were remarkable for the quantity of fish they yielded. Within the last two years, however, the fish seem to have left their accustomed haunts in this neighbourhood, as elsewhere in the Channel Islands; and, with the exception of lobsters, there is little profit made of any fishery.

A visit to the Chaussey Islands is not accomplished without some risk of discomfort and detention. Starting at nine in the morning of a fine day, with a light, but favourable breeze, from Granville, the writer of this article found himself sailing backwards and forwards admiring the rocks, and very slowly approaching them, during about six hours, and did not succeed in landing till 4 p.m. The distance in a direct line being only eight miles, and the sea calm, a pair of oars would have been more efficacious than canvass; but, once embarked, there was no choice.

The Chaussey Islands are at present objects of some interest in connection with the defences of the Channel, but we have already observed that they are hardly capable of operating injuriously to England on a large scale. Their position in the deepest recess of the great bay formed by the coasts of Brittany and Normandy, from which they are nearly equidistant, certainly enables them to command the small shallow Bay of Avranches; but the peculiar run of the tide, the vast extent of sand, and the innumerable rocks in that neighbourhood, form natural defences superior to any that can be built. We certainly ought not to complain if our neighbours endeavour to make the most of the very small natural advantages they here possess, when we consider that all that is most valuable and important among the Channel Islands, although very near France, and far from us, are, and must remain in our possession, so long as England retains the command of the seas. Jersey and Alderney are not much further from Normandy than the Chaussey Islands, and are far better situated—the former for commerce, the latter for defence—than the poor group of barren granite hillocks torn by the sea, and often hardly approachable, that are now being rendered more useful than they have lately been.

FOR THE YOUNG OF THE HOUSEHOLD.

IN COZY NOOK.

THE FALL OF THE LEAVES.

ONCE upon a time (a long while ago), the trees were green all the year round. I dare say you often wonder—I used to—why, in winter time, when the cruel North Wind comes sweeping through the branches, and the driving snow and hail fall pitilessly alike on the clothed and the naked, and we who can do so wrap ourselves as warmly as possible, the poor trees, stripped of all their gay summer clothing, are left to shiver and tremble in the cold.

There is an old forgotten legend which tells us of the green beauty of the trees through the entire year, and of the punishment inflicted on them, for—But I shall leave my young friends to find out the cause.

It was a bright morning—bright everywhere, but especially so in the woods, where the sunshine, streaming in through every opening among the branches, was heightened by the contrast of the cool green shadow under those boughs too closely intertwined to give his rays a passage. There was a very bright sunny spot in front of a stately Beech tree, whose spreading roots, grown over with moss, seemed made for a resting-place. Not a breath of wind was stirring, and yet there seemed a wonderful commotion among the leaves, particularly the little ones. A Hazel and a Hornbeam, that stood near, were trembling all over, and a small Hawthorn close by looked quite ridiculous, it did so shiver and quiver.

“Hey-day! what’s the matter with you all,” cried a bright-eyed young Squirrel; “you look as sulky at each other as a Nuthatch when she finds me cracking nuts and only leaving her the shells, a sort of game I’m fond of. How cross you all are! Can’t you speak out, instead of muttering and grumbling, and sulking?”

“Mind your own business!” said the Hawthorn, irritably, “and leave your betters alone.”

“My betters! that’s a good joke! Bless you, ma’am, you were made for my convenience!” and he skipped nimbly from the Hazel in which he sat, to the stem of the Hawthorn, and leapt from bough to bough. Presently he pricked himself so sharply, that he was glad to skip back again.

“Who got the worst of it?” cried a Magpie, from her nest in the middle of the Hawthorn.

“But I shan’t leave them alone for all that!” muttered the Squirrel, spitefully. Squirrels can be spiteful.

“Well,” said the Elm tree, in a hollow voice; “my leaves may not be so bright as some of yours, but they are so neat and precise in pattern, besides being almost always the same size, that you had better cease this useless strife, and name me at once the King of the Woods.”

There was a great uproar at these words. About a dozen voices tried to be heard all at once. It was of no use—of course it never is!—but on they went, chattering one against another, getting angrier every moment, and certainly much further from bringing each other to reason. At last came a slight pause—“Silence! Hold your tongues, all of you!” shouted

the Oak—he spoke so sturdily, that they really did keep quiet for a few minutes)—“I don’t know what you mean by such presumption. I have been King of the Woods ever since I can remember, and long before too, I’ve no doubt.”

“Hear, hear!” cried the Squirrel.

“Have you, any of you, a leaf like mine, or fruit either? It makes me quite ashamed of you all; you ought to know better!”

“Well, to be sure!” said the Sycamore; “how very confident we are! Why, my dear fellow,”—(the Oak writhed under the familiarity)—“my leaf has not only more form in it than yours, but it would take at least three of yours to make one of mine: and as to fruit and blossom—Ha! ha!” laughed the Sycamore—for a Sycamore is rather sweet-tempered; “I can’t help laughing—you’re really too amusing!”

“Pooh!” said the Ash, in a tough, obstinate voice; “if we’re quarrelling about fruit, I suppose the palm must be adjudged to me; but I understood, so far as in such a Babel one can understand anything, that the beauty of our *leaves* was what we were discussing; and I suppose, for elegance, none equal mine.”

“Oh, as to elegance,” cried a tall, slender Silver Birch, that stood near, and an Aspen tree, both together, “I have the best claim!” And then they looked at each other fiercely, as much as to say, “How dare you take the words out of my mouth?”

“We were talking of *green* leaves, I thought, not of *grey* ones,” said a Beech tree, whose exquisite silken foliage formed a perfect curtain of verdure; and the Beech tree coughed in such a lady-like, well-dressed manner, that it was quite pleasant to listen to it.

“Ah! now she’s going to begin,” said the envious little Hornbeam, “we shall none of us have a chance.” The Hornbeam tried hard to imitate the Beech, but did not quite manage it.

Good manners generally find a hearing. Of course, the Beech tree had no right to sneer at her neighbours; but then, she spoke gently and sweetly, and a soft voice works wonders with some folks—at least, it did with the Oak—and he declared himself willing to share the empire of the woods with the Beech tree. “You shall henceforth be my Queen,” he said; but the universal discontent showed that this would not end the contest.

The Elm seemed greatly put out. “I thought you would have stood by a sturdy old friend like myself, friend Oak, instead of listening to the smooth tongue of a satin-skinned creature that has nothing in common with you.”

“And I wouldn’t advise you to have anything to do with her, Mr. Oak,” whispered the Hornbeam; “she’s *fractious* enough sometimes, I assure you.”

The Poplars, both Black and White, with their taller brother, were very angry, but held aloof from the quarrel, only their leaves trembled more than over with suppressed rage. They felt sure the Beech had talked about *grey* leaves on purpose to vex them; it was just like her conceit. Poor sulky trees, the Beech had thought more of making her own little joke than of hurting them. She was far too impulsive to be spiteful, though she certainly was inconsiderate.

“I think,” said a Horse Chesnut, in a soft, rather lisping voice, “that

my leaves are handsomer than any of yours; but I suppose you acknowledge that; only, because I am a foreigner you won't have anything to say to me."

No one answered directly; but the Hornbeam whispered to the Hazel, the Hawthorn, and Maple, and a few of the smaller trees; and after some consultation they all shouted out that they would support the Horse Chesnut against the Beech and the Oak. The Horse Chesnut burst into a foolish horse-laugh; but a more distinct laugh came from the spreading moss-grown roots of the Beech tree. A green-and-gold Lizard had been awakened from his afternoon nap by the unusual commotion around him. The trees seemed a little startled, for a Lizard's laugh is a very curious sound, and not often heard. It takes a great deal to make a Lizard laugh. So it shows how silly this one must have thought the trees.

"You had better all look at me," he said—and he crawled out in full view of them—"and then perhaps you'll know what *green* really is. The Beech tree is not so bad, but I think she tries to imitate me; so, after all, she is not original. Why, even the Grass is greener than you are! I suppose it will take to boasting next: some people make their beauty quite a bore. Now, you could none of you do this, if you tried ever so hard." And he darted out his tongue and seized an unlucky Fly perched on a blade of Grass near him; then he crawled out into the sunshine, and twinkled his eyes, and looked with undisguised contempt around him.

The Beech tree laughed. "Was ever such a little lump of conceit?" she said; "but small bodies usually have vast opinions of themselves."

What an unlucky speech. The little trees began, with one accord, to inveigh against her presumption and that of all their larger brethren. The quarrel grew fiercer and fiercer; the Hornbeam was so insulting that even the Beech and the Oak were moved to angry threats. The uproar became so violent, that all through the day no sound, but that of angry, discordant voices, was audible; all the peace of the green wood had vanished. However, as night approached, they either grew sleepy or hoarse—very likely the latter; for there is no tree that grows ready-made sugar-candy or liquorice, or black-currant lozenges; or perhaps the absence of the sun's light settled the dispute about colour; but as the moon rose, peace seemed to overspread the assemblage. The leaves shone either silver white, or formed undistinguishable shadowy masses. Amid this deep stillness a croaking sound was heard; it came nearer—nearer still. The Horse Chesnut trembled with fright and held his breath. What could it be? Presently a fat Frog hopped, with slow plethoric hops, into the open space in front of the Beech tree, now silvered by the moonbeams.

"Dear, dear! I'm quite exhausted," said the Frog; "the wind's in the east, and that tries me severely. I've such delicate nerves and short breath. Heigh-ho! Ah! how you frightened me." This was addressed to a dry twig that fell to the ground—the Squirrel had snapped it off in springing from one tree to another, to gain a better view of the visitor. "I ought not to have faced the wind; one scarcely feels it in the water; but all through the day I have heard such an extraordinary noise, that I felt it my duty, as an influential member of society, to inquire into the cause of it."

"Very neatly said," remarked the Squirrel; "I don't think I could do it much better myself."

"Stuff!" said the Magpie, disturbed in her sleep—and cross, of course.

The Frog looked about him to discover the speakers, but he was too important a person to have his equanimity disturbed easily. So he hopped up and down in the moonlight, drawing each long hind-leg after the other, and holding his nose high in the air to show his breeding, quite like a person of imaginary quality. The Squirrel was so amused, that he jumped down from the tree and walked gravely to meet the Frog as he returned, taking care to hold his nose up properly also.

The Frog looked at him; but he remembered that they had not been introduced, and he was far too well-bred to speak without that ceremony.

"You are rude, my good fellow!" said the Squirrel; "I suppose the dampness of the place you inhabit takes the polish off your manners."

The Frog swelled, and his eyes brightened; but he said to himself, "This is a low-bred animal, or he would not have such long hair."

The Squirrel was determined to make him speak.

"Are you deaf?" shouted he; and he threw a dried Larch cone at the Frog. How he jumped and trembled with fright!

"You unmannerly savage!" he exclaimed, as soon as he had breath; "is this the way you behave to people of quality?"

"Dear me; don't be fussy!" said the Squirrel, sitting erect, with his tail more bushy than ever. "I fancied a game at ball would be a treat for you—Play!" and he bowled another cone at him.

The Frog thought him insane; but thought passed slowly through his brain, and did not shape itself easily into words. At length, however, he came to the conclusion that this curious creature might be able to give him the information he wanted. So, after waddling up and down with great dignity, he paused just in front of the Squirrel, who sat watching him.

"Have you heard anything to-day?" he said, puffing out his cheeks between every word.

"Yes," said the Squirrel; "I've heard the Birds sing, and the Wood-pigeons coo, and the Leaves rustle; and since then the Beetles have been humming, and the Owl has been hooting, and the Night Hawk has rattled, and my old friend the Bat has been whirring about, and——"

"And you have heard your own voice," said the Frog, "Ha—ha—ha!" he always laughed at his own jokes—a slow, measured laugh, you understand, quite in keeping with his position as a Frog and the father of a family.

"But have you not heard a peculiar sound different from anything I ever heard before?"

"Oh, I know what you mean now," said the Squirrel; "there have been breezes among the trees to-day."

The Frog looked puzzled, and begged to know what he meant.

"Well; the trees have been quarrelling about their clothing."

"Vain, foolish creatures," said the Frog, his sides heaving with exalted pity, "as if all beauty were not skin deep."

"Oh, it's all very well for a speckled old fright like you," said the Hornbeam spitefully, "to cry down beauty; wait till you've got it, and then you'll think twice about its being deep or not."

The Frog did not condescend to answer her. He told the Squirrel, that pride of beauty or knowledge showed a lamentable want of sense and judgment—that position and influence were the true sources of pride, as they give their possessors a right to judge for others as well as for themselves.

"That's exactly my way," said the Squirrel; "I always let my *own* little matters settle themselves, and I meddle with all my neighbours instead; so you see, Mr. Speckles, we're of the same way of thinking after all," and he gave the Frog a playful push in the side.

"Friend, you become familiar," croaked the Frog, waddling off hastily; "but I want to know how this quarrel has ended?"

"Why, as most quarrels do," said the Squirrel, "in the middle; and I expect they'll be at it again to-morrow," he added in a lower voice: "and for my part, I don't care how long it lasts, some of them get into such a rage that it's nuts to me to watch them."

The Frog looked shocked. "I fear, my friend, you have fallen among evil companions," he said, "or you would lament over their folly; but, surely, if they were better advised—if some judicious sensible counsellor were to point out the path of duty—they might be restored to harmony."

"Ha—ha—ha!" laughed the Magpie, from her nest in the Hawthorn.

"Well, Mr. Speckles, you had better try your hand then," said the Squirrel, mischievously—"not to-night; it's no use; but return to-morrow in the sunshine, and have your croak out."

"I'll think over it," said the Frog. "After all, you seem to have some discernment, my young friend, although you are so unfortunate in your choice of words. I wish you good evening." And he waddled pompously down to his pond, thinking what a good thing it was to be able to say the right thing in the right place!

When he got home he told his adventures to his wife and his two daughters. Mrs. Frog was a poor, thin, weak-spirited creature, who lived in much awe of her important spouse; her two daughters were rather old young ladies, proud of their papa—whom they greatly resembled—and very much inclined to snub their mamma.

The eldest, Miss Souchy, was very proud of her slim figure, and spent a considerable part of every day on land, as she found the water far too fattening. Her younger sister, Miss Pollywog, passed an existence of self-admiration. She thought some one or other was always looking at her, and, poor thing, moved, and talked, and acted for the benefit of those who she felt were contemplating her. She was rather near-sighted, however; so this often happened when there was no spectator present.

She seemed surprised that the trees should think themselves handsome.

"Dear me, papa," she said, simperingly, and putting her head on one side, to show the double crease in her throat, which, as of course you know, is a great beauty in a Frog, "is not vanity a very foolish thing?"

"A very foolish thing indeed, my sweet child, only indulged in by those who have nothing to be vain of. *Proper* pride is very different. My Souchy is proud of her graceful shape, and with reason," said papa Frog; "but those overgrown monsters up yonder have no claims to distinction."

Here he saw poor Mrs. Frog yawning as if she were about to swallow the whole family, and as, with all his dignity, he was sometimes benevolent, he took pity on the poor creature, and desired them to seek their repose.

When the sun rose the quarrel began again.

An unlucky Larch timidly suggested that the colour of his leaves was sometimes a very brilliant green.

"*Leaves* indeed!" said the Hornbeam. "Needles, or spines, you mean.

I wonder you or any of your dusky brethren dare lay claim to the least beauty."

"I never heard such presumption!" echoed the Thorn, and all the little trees—even the Oak and the Beech laughed scornfully; but a tall Scotch Fir whispered to the Larch, and it made no reply—nor did any of the Pine trees take the slightest notice of the insults heaped on them; but the other trees had so given themselves up to pride and envy, that they saw only cowardice in this forbearance, and persisted in insulting the Firs for their want of leaves, just as on the previous day they had taunted each other.

The Magpie in her nest was evidently enraged at the renewed disturbance, and expressed her displeasure in strong terms.

The Pines, however, listened to the voice of their kinsman, a venerable Yew; and although tears of wounded feeling, and, with many, of repressed anger, trickled down their trunks, they maintained silence. The Yew tree reminded them, that nothing on the face of the earth was self-created, and that, therefore, to find fault with either their own foliage or that of others, was to question the wisdom of their Maker—and the Pine trees bowed their heads solemnly, and obeyed him.

When the trees grew tired of insulting the Pines, they began to attack each other again; even those who professed to side together could not resist a sharp word or an unkind allusion to their neighbours' infirmities; for it is very difficult to stop the tongue when once it has galloped as fast as it likes. The moss-grown roots of the Beech tree no longer offered a quiet resting-place—perpetual discord raged all around.

Towards evening the Frog toiled up to the scene of conflict. All day he had been composing a speech. The Squirrel had found the wood so noisy that he had roamed about during the day, restlessly moving from place to place; but now he returned towards his nest, just as the Frog reached the foot of the Beech tree.

"Why, Mr. Speckles, only just come!" he called out; "I thought you would have been here long ago."

"I preferred waiting till the heat of the sun should have abated, my young friend, the ascent is fatiguing enough without that."

"Well, you had better make haste," said the Squirrel; "croak away."

"Be silent, my friend, I beg!"

And the Frog hopped backwards slowly, and surveyed the Trees. He then cleared his throat in a majestic manner, sitting as upright as he could.

"Oh, Trees!" he began; "how sad is this silly vanity that causes strife among you. Look at me—see the natural advantages I possess; and yet, except for your benefit, I do not boast of them. Consider, that all beauty is but, as I said last night, skin deep—skin deep. I warn you, this pride and vanity will draw down some fearful judgment upon you;" and the Frog, wagging his head from side to side, looked sad and oracular.

But the Trees would not listen to the Frog—they scoffed at him; they were too angry to laugh, except in a savage way, like a hyena when he is very hungry; and at last they all shouted out in chorus, "You're nothing but a croaker!"

"Croak, croak, croak at your brother!"

Why should not one frog croak at another?"

The poor Frog tried to be heard, but it was impossible amid such a din;

and even the Squirrel, although he blamed the Trees, could not help laughing at his friend Speckles's woe-begone countenance, as he turned slowly round, and hopped down hill a good deal quicker than he had mounted it.

The wicked old Magpie in the Hawthorn was convulsed with laughter.

The Trees continued to quarrel till evening had closed in; there was no moon—all looked dark and gloomy.

"So much the better for me," said a short-tailed Field-Mouse, as he crept up from the roots of the Beech, which he had been diligently munching; "I like a little green-meat by way of a change."

The Squirrel soon spied out something nibbling at some tender green shoots that had sprung out of the trunk of the Beech tree.

"Why, Mousey," he cried, "I'm proud to see you here again. Come down and have a chat, old friend! Where have you been this long time?"

The Field-Mouse was a plump, bluff-looking fellow—such a mouse as you might expect to meet in a smock-frock and top-boots. He rather swaggered as he came down to meet the Squirrel.

"Why," he said, "to tell the truth, that nasty chattering Magpie, in its nest in the Hawthorn tree, has such a sharp look-out after me, I'm afraid to show myself by day, and we've had very light evenings lately."

"Ah, then you don't like the moon, I suppose?"

"I don't like anything that is of no use to me."

"Then, of course you don't like the Magpie?"

"No," said the Field-Mouse, gruffly; "and yet, although I'm afraid of her, I have a contempt for a creature that can only find its food by sight instead of using its nose."

"But birds haven't any noses," said the Squirrel.

"No; and that's why I despise them—poor, ignorant, half-formed animals with only two feet and no noses."

"I can't make it out," said the Squirrel; "I can't think what has come over everybody! You are just like the Trees. Now, if this is to go on, and none will yield, how are we ever to be at peace again?"

"Dear me," said the Field-Mouse, "you've taken to preaching, have you? Do wait till I have done my supper, my good friend, or you'll disturb my digestion; then you shall come to my nest and prose me to sleep."

"You are a rude, ungrateful little creature," said the Squirrel; and he cried with vexation—for he really cared for the Field-Mouse. The latter paid not the slightest attention, but devoured the young shoots one after another as fast as he could.

"Well, to be sure," said he, "how juicy and crisp is a Beech salad! I'll come here again the next dark evening, and bring Mrs. Short-tail too, if she behaves herself."

He spoke rather loud, to show his indifference to the Squirrel. But scarcely had he uttered the words, when he was seized across the back, thrown high in air, and caught in the beak of a huge Owl, who, with two successive jerks, swallowed him whole, and then uttered a screech of delight that made the wood ring again.

"Poor little fellow," said the Squirrel, keeping at a respectful distance from the feathered Ogre, "there's an end to his self-conceit."

"What moralizing!" said the Owl, half shutting his eyes; "I approve of that; but it is more than I expected of such a rantipole."

Now, if the Owl had said this to the Frog or the Field-Mouse, they would have been offended, and would have given themselves airs directly; but the Squirrel, though saucy, was not airified; he thought there were plenty of Squirrels as good or better than himself. He shuddered at the idea of a monster who swallowed his friends like a pill; but still he knew the Owl was a very wise bird. So he asked him how he thought the quarrel among the Trees would end? "I'm growing mighty sick of it," said he.

The Owl shut first one eye, then the other, puffed out his feathers, and put his head on one side. "I don't think they'll end it at all."

"What! Do you mean to say they will go on quarrelling day after day, as they have done lately, for ever?"

"I never jump at conclusions, Master Squirrel. I said *they* would not end their quarrel. I never said it would continue." The Owl nodded his head sagaciously three times, and then flew into an ivied Elm tree, uttering a long wild screech as he went.

In the night the Trees were all awakened by—they did not know what.

An awful terror and dread passed over them; they heard no sound, and yet each had started from his sleep as if at some loud summons. Their hearts stood still with fear. Was this Death? A strange lethargy crept over them—their very thoughts were benumbed.

The morning light came; they could not renew their angry strife; they stood exhausted and powerless. What had happened to them in the darkness? Their bright green tints had faded; to their dismay they saw the ground besprinkled with their fast-falling leaves. They dared not speak, even if their failing vigour and sap had given them the power.

Deep, mournful silence, reigned, unbroken even by the Squirrel, who seemed as much surprised as the Trees, and he really was very sorry for their punishment.

But there was worse in store.

Winter came, and the North Wind and the East strove for mastery; but they no longer rustled through the Oak leaves, or played with the silken garments of the Beech tree; they roared and whistled through bare branches—the vain, jealous Trees, stripped of all clothing, stood shivering, as the hail-stones rattled against their bark. They did not dare to look at their despised neighbours, the Pine trees, warmly sheltered in their dusky foliage. Ah, how they repented their folly!

"Bless me," said the Frog, one fine day, as soon as he recovered his breath—for hopping up that hill tried the old gentleman—"you had better have listened to me, you see! I told you exactly how it would be."

"You are an old coward, Speckles, as well as a croaker," said the Squirrel indignantly; "you ought—"

But he did not finish his sentence. A large ringed Snake, whom the unusual warmth of the mid-day sun had awakened to a sense of his long fast, glided forth and darted upon the unhappy boaster. He struggled valorously, for his head and shoulders were still free; but the Snake was too strong for him, and, besides, wanted his dinner.

So, with a shriek of despair, poor Mr. Speckles disappeared from the scene of his intended triumph.



A PLACE OF DARKNESS, AND IN THE DEEP.

BY T. SOPWITH, F.R.S.



THE recent calamity at Hartley New Pit, in Northumberland, has caused a general feeling of consternation almost without parallel in the recent history of this country. It has happened at a time when the nation is in deep sympathy with our beloved Queen—not only for her loss, but for that which the nation has sustained in the death of a great benefactor. Never, perhaps, has a deeper feeling of sorrow prevailed for the loss of a Royal personage, and few if any events of modern times have had stronger claims on the sympathy of the public, than the burial alive

of more than two hundred of the worthy and hardy sons of toil in that "Place of Darkness, and in the Deep," of which we purpose now to give some descriptive account, and to offer some suggestive comments.

Our readers are aware that the coal-producing districts of Northumberland and Durham are the most extensive and important in Great Britain. It is from thence that the Metropolis is and has long been

chiefly supplied with coal, and in them Science and Art have been largely applied in ameliorating the inevitable dangers and difficulties of mining. We do not now stop to consider, in any detail, the important influences which, in connection with coal, have had a bearing upon the general interests of the community. The lofty dome in this City, under which the ashes of Nelson and Wellington repose, was chiefly reared by a duty on coal. Railroads—the great means of improvement and civilization—originated in the North of England coal districts. George Stephenson, as a miner, originated plans of world-wide usefulness and unending fame, which his accomplished son continued; and if we look at a railway map of England, a single glance will show how intimately connected the coal trade of Northumberland and Durham is with the system of railway communication. A perfect net-work of railways will be seen to cover the Eastern districts of these two counties. To come nearer home—even to the very hearths round which, in winter, we love to gather—what is there more connected with health and comfort than that abundant supply of coal, furnished in a larger proportion by the Northern counties than by any other part of the kingdom?

COAL is the foundation of our national wealth as much as it is the means of individual comfort. Let any family imagine, that, even for a single week, in the midst of a severe winter, they were wholly unsupplied with coal. Wealth, no doubt, for a time could command other fuel; but wealth cannot create full-grown forests for any permanent or long-enduring supply, and the stoppage of ordinary supplies of coal would create an amount of social suffering which would be but too painfully appreciated, if such a misfortune were to occur. What the stoppage of a supply of coal to a family would be in discomfort, it would, on a larger scale, be as a calamity to the nation at large. It would result in the loss of England's prestige as one of the most rich and powerful nations of the earth; in the loss of all chief means of industry; in the stoppage of all iron furnaces and manufactories; the impossibility of transit by steam: in short, it would speedily create enduring disaster and national ruin. These broad views of the effects which the loss of, or a great scarcity of, coal, would produce, give deep significance to a calamity which has a practical bearing so momentous.

Addressing ourselves, then, to general readers, we shall first give a brief description of the coal-field, or district, in which Hartley is situated. We shall next speak of the incidents of the astounding calamity which has so much engrossed public attention, and consider how far the pressure of this great affliction has been, and can still further be, lessened to the surviving relatives of the lost ones. Still more important is it to consider how far means may be devised to prevent the recurrence of such calamities, and how far the national welfare may demand an increased attention to the conservation of coal, as well as the preservation of the lives of those who work it.

In early times coal was worked at the very surface of the earth, in places where it basseted, or, to use a mining phrase, "cropped out." Pits, or other excavations of moderate extent, soon became necessary, in which hand labour sufficed to extract both water and coal. Of a material so much in demand, the supplies thus readily attainable were of course soon exhausted; and at length it became necessary to use machinery, for the double purpose of draining the mine and drawing up the water and coal. The depth became more and more considerable, and has at length, in the coal districts of which we now speak, reached an extent which the reader may more readily comprehend by some comparisons than by a mere statement of figures. We read of yards and fathoms—the latter is the language of miners; and it will be sufficient for a general idea if we reckon the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral as about sixty fathoms in height. At one coal mine in Durham a shaft *five times* this depth has been sunk, viz., to three hundred fathoms, or eighteen hundred feet. From one to two hundred fathoms is a usual depth, and the workings in the coal seams, to which such shafts are the only means of access, are indeed "Places of Darkness, and in the Deep."

In the midst of strata, or rocks, amounting in the aggregate to nearly two thousand feet in thickness, there are in the coal-fields now referred to about sixty beds, or seams, of coal. These vary in thickness, from a few inches to four or five, and, in some cases, to nearly six feet; and although the thickness of all the seams, when added together, is upwards of seventy feet, yet, except nine or ten beds or seams, all are under a yard in thickness, and the workable seams are mostly from two and a half to five feet in thickness. Of the position, range or extent, dislocations, or breaking asunder, and other phenomena of these seams of coal and associated strata, much might be said; but we can here only allude to such conditions as relate to the present subject. If coal-seams or strata were regularly deposited over a wide district, free from geological causes of disturbance, the task of mining would be comparatively secure, and the large capital required for mining adventure might be confidently expended. It is not so, however. *Faults*, or "troubles" as they are locally termed, extend in various directions, and greatly complicate the miner's toil. Hence it has happened, that in the *winning*, as it is termed, of a colliery, large adventures, directed with scientific skill, have nevertheless proved failures. Vast fortunes have been expended in contending with powers of nature, the exact character of which are only known when it has become too late to do otherwise than either yield in despair or engage in actual conflict. Then, when the coal has been "won," and numbers of miners are employed, there are many risks with which the public are but too well acquainted. There is liability to explosion, to inundation, the falling of stone from the roof, the breaking of ropes, and other accidents occurring in coal-mines, not unfrequently resulting in serious loss of life and property. To these are added, at times, accidents of so strange and excep-

tional a nature, that no human forethought could have anticipated their occurrence, any more than human exertion—as in the dreadful instance at Hartley—could have remedied the calamity.

In the middle of December last, travellers on the railways of the colliery districts near Newcastle witnessed, that, amongst the mining population—and especially in women returning from market to their homes—there was a deep expression of sympathy in the great sorrow which had come so suddenly and sadly on the nation. They were heard, says a local paper, commiserating in homely, but sincere terms, the deep affliction of our beloved Queen. Ere another month had passed, the shadows of death hung over their own homes, with an intensity of bitter suffering which it is almost harrowing to think of. The homes of the entire population of a hitherto industrious and flourishing district were plunged in more anxiety and grief than is usually caused even by the certainty of death; for it involved not only the eventual loss, but the probability of great suffering of the doomed ones. The husbands, the brothers, the sons—Where were they? Alas! immured in the midst of perils—in darkness, exposed to hunger, to thirst, and suffocation; in short, to many chances of death in that lowest place in which they were entombed—"a Place of Darkness, and in the Deep."

On Thursday, the 16th January, 1862, a rumour was spread abroad in the town and neighbourhood of Newcastle, that an accident had happened at Hartley Colliery. In the first instance few comprehended, or had reason to suppose, that it was more than one of those accidents to which coal-miners are occasionally subject. It was not then thought that this was beyond all doubt the most terrific and fatal accident that has occurred in this district, or in any other coal mine in this kingdom.

The awful truth, however, speedily became known. To the death of five persons in the shaft was added the sad calamity that more than two hundred men and boys were deprived of all means of escape by obstructions in the shaft; and when or how these obstructions were to be removed became a problem of the deepest interest—of the most intense agony. Accidents have from time to time occurred from explosions, carrying with them swift destruction to inmates of mines—by inundations, whereby large numbers of workmen and boys have been long immured, and finally lost—by falls of rock or coal, and by other causes which may be considered as painfully yet necessarily incident to coal mining; but the accident at Hartley was one almost wholly unprecedented in its cause, and wholly unexampled as regards its fatal character.

The great quantity of water in the mine required corresponding powers of machinery, and the engine-beam employed for working the pumps was of unusual weight, being about forty tons. This ponderous beam suddenly broke, between ten and eleven o'clock on Thursday morning, the 16th of January. No indications of weakness had been observed. It had been made at an establishment well known for the excellence of its work,

and the critical examination to which all such manufacture is subjected had failed to discover any imperfection. Whether any slight concussion, or sudden fall of even a few inches, may have induced weakness, has been a subject of inquiry; but, as at present known, it does not appear that any sagacity, however keen, could have detected evidence of any probability of its breaking. In a moment, one half of this ponderous beam snapped asunder, and a mass of iron, twenty tons in weight, fell into the shaft; it descended with resistless force, tearing away the brattice, or wooden partition, in the shaft, and caused the death of five men who were ascending. Other three were seriously imperilled; they were fastened in a mass of *débris* from which in about twelve hours two of them were rescued. The other unfortunately perished. The detailed account of dangers they endured is among the most touching and remarkable events that have ever attracted public attention. For presence of mind, for patient endurance, for persevering efforts, it may be ranked among the noblest achievements of heroism; but a higher interest belongs to it—a deeper pathos is imparted, and a holier lesson is taught, by the example of true piety and devout submission of those seemingly doomed ones. Their language was not the language of complaint—their sorrows assumed not the character of despair. Buried for twelve hours, apparently with the certainty of impending death, it is alike consolatory and instructive to know that they had recourse to prayer, and of this we purpose to say more in the sequel.

If the ill-fated beam had descended to the bottom of the shaft, the injury to the miners ascending would not perhaps have been greater; but in all probability the means of access to the workmen and boys in the mine would have been more readily available. Such, however, was not the case—the half beam, the ponderous load of twenty tons, became fixed in the shaft, a quantity of timber, loose stones, and earth, fell upon it, and, to use a common expression, *choked up*, or formed a solid obstruction in the shaft.

At this time it was supposed that 215 men and boys were in the workings of the mine. Later information has lessened this number to 204. Under ordinary circumstances they would have come *to bank*, that is, to the surface, either by entering the shaft at the bottom, or from a higher seam—the Yard Coal. These were the only means of outlet. The shaft being the only outlet to the surface, it most unfortunately happened that the obstruction caused by the broken beam was above the highest of these outlets; and thus all egress was prevented. Such are the few and simple, but most calamitous circumstances, of this accident. The geologist and the miner, the mechanic or the enginewright, may find many data of great interest in inquiries into details connected with this sad event; but, for the objects we have now in view, a brief account of the accident only is required. Suffice to say, that in this manner upwards of 200 men and boys were entombed, at a depth of several hundred feet from the surface,

confined in the workings of the mine. Alas! how truly "a Place of Darkness, and in the Deep!"

And now,—what is the sad order of incidents to be noticed,—of reflections which present themselves,—of suggestions for future safety? They are doubtless many and important. We have first to notice *the remarkable character* of the accident, as one that apparently seems to have afforded no opportunity of prevention by any sagacity or foresight. For many years past, public attention has been much directed to colliery accidents. Very great precautions are taken to avoid explosions. Every incident connected with fatal accidents has undergone most patient and scientific investigation; and any one who will look over the volumes of the "Transactions of the Northern Institute of Mining Engineers" will see what a readiness is shown to impart information, and to seek every means of safety and improvement. This calamity resembles in its character a class of above-ground accidents against which no ordinary forethought can prevail. We say ordinary forethought, for it is doubtless true, that, by repeated lessons of experience, an increased degree of attention may be, and is, directed to special causes of danger. For example, there is every probability that within the last few months a careful survey and examination of old houses have been made in Edinburgh; this may, and in all probability will, avert the fall of some of them; but then, such a survey would not have been so carefully made had it not been for the serious accident of the fall of one house, and the loss of several lives. In like manner, there is no doubt that the fracture of the engine-beam at Hartley will not only cause the more extensive use of wrought-iron, but will induce increased attention to all the machinery employed. Coal mining is necessarily attended with dangers, some of which, as in the present instance, seem to be beyond all means of human prevention. It is quite true, that the existence of another shaft would have been invaluable in this instance; and this very obvious point has been much insisted upon. It seems apparent to every one; but the very fact of its being so apparent must also suggest that the use of two or more shafts must be well known to the owners and conductors of collieries, and that the question is mixed up with conditions which are of a more extensive and complicated character than appears on the surface of the question. What we now propose to consider is, not whether, as an abstract question, a double outlet is preferable to a single one; none can dispute that. Neither do we contemplate any other than the absolute necessity of having two outlets to all extensive collieries. What we wish, however, to remark is—That *under circumstances as they now exist*, any greatly-increased expenditure for any object, however desirable, would, in certain cases, be equivalent to shutting-up, and perhaps eventually losing, large quantities of coal. That, in a still greater number of cases, the compulsory adoption of every possible anticipation of remedial means would largely increase the cost of coal; and that carries with it an increased cost of manufacture that tells largely

on commercial interests, as well as upon domestic comfort. Although it is almost beyond the reach of hope that any exercise of human skill can foresee every possible chance of accident, in so dangerous an occupation as working seams of coal at a great depth, yet it is undoubtedly alike the duty and interest of all concerned to aim at doing so as much as possible. When it is out of the power of private individuals, or owners of small properties, to avert or lessen serious dangers affecting the public welfare, it becomes the duty of the State to afford all means of safety that can be effected by legislative power, and if necessary to render private interests subservient to the public good. To these we will add a further consideration intimately connected with the subject—namely, that the *Conservation of Coal* in this kingdom is a matter of the deepest importance to the community.

Taking these in their order, we shall consider them, not so much as questions of a purely economical character, but as involving the interests of humanity at large. There are conflicting considerations. Danger is to be avoided if possible; but national interests are not to be neglected. It would be well if the wretched extremes of poverty and crime could be banished from our land; but all considerate men know, that even the very means intended to remedy such evils have sometimes a contrary effect, whilst even the most hopeful despair of doing more than ameliorate such conditions. We must therefore endeavour to look wisely and well at such means as appear calculated to produce beneficial results, without aiming at extremes beyond the limits of reasonable hope. It is also with especial reference to the late calamity that the several considerations now recited more especially have a claim on public attention at this time.

If at Hartley New Pit there had been two shafts, the worst features of the calamity would have been avoided. The loss of six lives, and some considerable injury to property, would have been the extent of misfortune. Hence it is assumed, that in all collieries two shafts should be sunk. This reasoning is clear enough, as applicable to this case; but it does not follow that double shafts, or even numerous shafts, are effectual preservatives from serious danger; and it thus becomes an object worthy of consideration, whether remedies of a wider character and more extensive application can be found. The cost of sinking pits is often very great. No doubt twenty, thirty, or fifty thousand pounds had better have been expended than that so disastrous a calamity should have occurred. Accidents like this at Hartley, and many that have happened by explosions and inundations, are not to be measured as with any outlay, however great. It is in the application of correct general principles that the only extensive chance of exemption from severe accidents exists; and the difficulty that suggests itself is, that as seams of coal are now divided into a great number of separate portions, corresponding with tracts of greater or less extent on the surface, they can only be dealt with as in relation to such artificial limits, and not upon any wide basis depending on their geological

position as regards inclination, and as bounded by faults or dislocations of strata, &c. Tracts of coal thus bounded, and extending over a sufficiently large area, would admit of an expenditure regulated by and dependent on the adoption, not only of two or more shafts, but of every other precautionary measure. There are areas of coal royalties sufficiently large for a satisfactory arrangement of proper means of ventilation, &c.; but we are now speaking of the subject generally; and the cases are numerous where the intermixture of property offers serious impediments, and compels an economy which may be very serious in its results.

In 1835, Mr. Buddle, at that time considered as being at the head of his profession as a Colliery Viewer or Engineer, was examined before a Select Committee of the House of Commons upon this point of the number of shafts. He admitted that pits were sunk as sparingly as possible, and he referred to the vast expense frequently incurred; but then, in explanation, he also stated, that at Wallsend Colliery (where a serious accident had not long before happened), "There are more pits than in any other colliery in the North of England; for there are no less than five shafts for the ventilation of one hundred acres, which is only equal to twenty acres for each pit. I do not believe," he continued, "there is any other colliery that has such a number of pits for the like extent of workings." Now, here, it is evident, if an accident similar to that of Hartley had occurred, these numerous shafts would have given means of escape; but notwithstanding these aids to ventilation, a very serious and fatal explosion took place, second only in its disastrous results to that at Hartley, upwards of one hundred lives having been sacrificed. To keep however, to the point now under consideration—the admitted remedy of two shafts for such a case as Hartley—the argument seems unanswerable. Expensive or not expensive, humanity seems to demand it; and even miners will not willingly risk themselves in a colliery with only one outlet. In all large royalties it appears inevitable, but taking the circumstances as they now exist, it is plainly stated by the same eminent authority, that "Legislative interference on that point would tend to extinguish a very large proportion of our coal mines."

Whether coal mines are abandoned, or worked at a greatly increased expense, matters not, as regards one inevitable result of either case. Whether from many costly mines, or, on these being abandoned, from a less number of equally costly mines possessing a greater monopoly, it is quite clear that the cost of coal would be largely increased. It is needless to say how seriously this would militate against the commercial welfare of this country. If, therefore, by legislative enactment, a geological and mining system of boundaries were adopted, without reference to territorial limits, and engines and other appliances used suitable for large districts, it would certainly tend to economy of work, as well as safety by admitting of the application of all remedial means on a large scale.

It cannot be contended by any one conversant with mining, that

any measures are within reach for entire security from danger. As soon may we expect the mariner to go forth with perfect exemption from the dangers of the sea. The seaman and the miner lead perilous lives, and though no skill can wholly prevent, it is doubtless true that means may be taken to lessen, the chances of danger. If these territorial boundaries are such as to form unsuitable limits for tracts of coal, it becomes no less the duty than the interest of the community to endeavour to lessen as much as possible any inconvenience and danger arising from this source. Partial remedies are occasionally made in this direction by altering boundaries from an irregular line to a straight one, and arrangements are not unfrequently made whereby several adjacent royalties are combined in one series of operations. A general and effective application of such a system of laying out coal mines cannot, however, be brought about, unless by a totally different arrangement, which shall consider the boundaries of coal as wholly unconnected with the boundaries of estates on the surface. But this would be an interference with private rights; landowners would never submit to have the exclusive possession of their coal taken from them. No arrangement for securing to them the full value of the coal, when worked, would be likely to satisfy them, and without their consent no such legislative enactment could be carried out. The weight of such objections is but too obvious. The difficulty is admitted—so are the dangers and loss to the public interests. If the difficulty cannot be overcome, the dangers and losses of the present system must continue. The subject is, at all events, worthy of consideration; because, even if it could not be universally adopted, there are large tracts of coal where the Crown and various public bodies are concerned, and there are doubtless many proprietors of coal who would consider public advantage (if proved to be such) before private interests. An example has been given of a similar arrangement in part of the Crown property, where local arrangements and long-standing customs gave way to legislative enactment, greatly to the benefit of all parties locally interested, and not less so to the revenues of the Crown from that source, which were thereby considerably increased. Moreover, it may be kept in view, that although some favourably-situated properties of magnitude might not be benefited, many small properties would derive material advantage from such a mode of dealing with coal as is here indicated. A full investigation of this subject would probably lead to an inference that it is the duty of the State to accomplish so great an amelioration to the utmost practicable extent.

Far beyond the importance of individual interests, and even exceeding in degree any usual amount of occasional accident and loss, there is another and higher point of view to be taken, and that is, that the conservation of coal is yearly becoming more and more an object of the deepest importance to reflecting minds. Calculations have been made so various in extent, as regards quantity and duration, that it is high time they were once more taken under careful review by Parliamentary inquiry. Large

or small, they generally proceed on the assumption, that wherever seams of coal are known to exist, there a certain specified quantity of coal will be obtained. The consumption of coal in these kingdoms has very greatly increased of late years; and nearly all cases of explosion, inundation, or other serious impediments, tend either to render coal more costly, or more difficult, if not impossible, to be worked. Serious as such losses are to coal-owners, they must eventually be still more serious to the public—not, indeed, as being immediately felt, but as tending to eventual decay in national resources, the approach of which may be found more rapid than is commonly supposed. It has been well observed by a great authority, “that the duration of our stores of coal is the measure of the possible duration of our country’s exalted position among the kingdoms of the earth.”

It is impossible that a misfortune so dreadful as that which has taken place at Hartley can pass over without making a very strong impression on the public mind. There is, indeed, much to reflect upon—much to affect the feelings, and to rouse a spirit of determination to attempt whatever can be accomplished in the way of remedy. In these observations we are desirous to show, that the adoption of a large and general principle, is more likely to effect safety and economy than any local or expedient plans based on any one or more accidents. Coal is a national treasure, and it behoves the nation to take care of it. In a colliery laid out on a complete and extensive plan, and, consequently, provided with an adequate number of shafts, such a dire calamity as that which has lately harrowed the feelings of the public could not have occurred. For ventilation, for the appliances of scientific skill, for economy, and for the completeness of means to obtain the largest possible quantity of coal—all tending to the duration and economical working of the coal-fields of Great Britain—such a general system of combined working will, probably, ere long be found indispensable. In the great coal-fields on the Tyne large quantities of coal are inundated, and it is only by a wide plan of co-operation that they can be drained: the alternative is, the total loss of the coal or the adoption of such a remedy. That almost insuperable difficulties present themselves even in a limited locality is but too true; but it is only when they are proved to be wholly insurmountable that the case should be abandoned as hopeless; and it is in this direction, we believe, that the only solid remedy for lessening the number and deplorable character of colliery accidents is to be found.

There is no doubt that interference with property to so large an extent as would be involved in any general measure relating to the conservation of coal seems almost without the limits of practicability; but this is the aspect which all such matters wear under the influence of long usage and accustomed modes of thinking. Some five or six centuries ago it would have been difficult to persuade the inhabitants of London that an article so prejudicial to health, as they considered coal to be, would not only be

in universal request, but that it would be used in such immense quantities as to be a means of defraying the cost of great public works by a small tax levied upon it. Even in recent years—not more than from twenty to thirty years ago—the introduction of railways was most strongly objected to by many, who would now gladly have them, as a direct benefit to their property. The duration of coal is a vital point; and it is not only the question of duration, but of cheapness. If the cost of coal is to become greater and greater every year, then it but too surely follows that the manufacturing and commercial prosperity of England must become less and less; and this is a point of view which concerns not only the proprietors of large tracts of coal, but the well-being of the country at large. If this is a visionary fear, let it be disregarded; but if there is even a possibility of its being a sober view, based on conditions which are easily ascertained, it may then be thought worthy of attentive consideration, based on earnest and detailed inquiries. Calamities such as this of Hartley necessarily attract attention, not only to the awful circumstances of the case, but they tend to the publication of details and information without which it would be difficult to obtain any large share of public attention. The lamentable tales of horror connected with that “Place of Darkness, and in the Deep,” which are now read with such mournful interest, cause grief for the unhappy sufferers and sympathy for their bereaved relatives; they also induce reflection on the means of prevention; and reflection by the public generally on such a point is usually an impulse to some efforts on the part of the Legislature. If an enactment were at once made that every mine should have two shafts, it might for a time satisfy the public mind; but it is obvious that this is only one of many matters to be attended to—that mining accidents are not unlikely to increase in magnitude in proportion as coal becomes deeper and more expensive to work, and that, unless due care and economy are exercised, a time may be too surely approaching when the consequences of neglect can no longer be avoided, and the common school-exercise adage be too surely verified, that “opportunity neglected can seldom be regained.”

One step has already been taken by Government tending in the direction of improvement, and that is, in the establishment of a Mining Record Office. This originated at Newcastle in 1838, during the meeting of the British Association. A committee was formed, and an office established for the reception of all such plans as should be voluntarily offered. In 1844, at another meeting in Newcastle, held with a view of promoting a national system for preserving mining records, it was resolved, on the motion of Mr. Nicholas Wood (so well-known for his long and most extensive experience in coal mining), “That a general and uniform registration of mining operations throughout the kingdom would tend to prevent many fatal accidents, would in other respects be of eminent utility to the interests of all persons concerned in mining, and would also confer a great national benefit.”

In 1851, the Mining Record Office, established in connection with the Government Museum of Practical Geology, was visited by H.R.H. Prince Albert, who expressed the strongest approval of the registration of mining plans, and gave directions thereupon as regards the Duchy of Cornwall Mines, in which, on behalf of the Prince of Wales, H.R.H. had taken great interest. This Record Office is placed in charge of Mr. Robert Hunt, under the general direction of Sir Roderick Murchison; and the series of records, and details of mining statistics, which have been so admirably collected and arranged by Mr. Hunt, and published by the Department of Science and Art, are as ample a result as could possibly have been expected from the limited means and purely voluntary character of the contributions of plans and documents. It is satisfactory however, as showing that attention has been directed to the subject of general supervision. The appointment of Government Inspectors of Mines has been another important work in the same direction; and the information thus obtained must be most important and useful, if any further efforts are made towards the conservation of coal and the prevention of serious accidents.

Reverting once more to the calamity which has suggested the mention of these views, it is needless here to repeat the sad details which day by day have been perused with so much anxiety and distress. From the Throne to the humblest cottage a deep feeling of commiseration has been excited. The story of the accident is but too plain and simple. The unexpected breaking of a beam—its sudden fall into the shaft, causing the death of six men—the blocking up of the shaft, and the entombment of 204 men and boys. Such is the brief recital; and imagination can scarcely picture forth anything more terrible. Dark indeed is the calamity; but if we turn to those incidents connected with it which afford consolation and hope, we shall find that they are many and great. If in this life only we have hope, then indeed would the darkness and the depth be distressing to contemplate; then indeed would the entombed victims have been of all men most miserable. But bright lessons of hope and immortality spring from those gloomy depths. A memorandum indicates that they were engaged in prayer, and states that one of them "*exhorted to us again.*" It is known that in a similar calamity at Heaton, when seventy-five men and boys were in like manner inclosed in the mine, a touching record was left. The bodies were not recovered until nine months after the inundation; but on a tin candle-box, scratched by a nail, were short messages inscribed by one of the sufferers—they were not in terms of suffering and despair, but, "Fret not, dear mother." "We were singing while we had time, and praising God." "Mother, follow God more than ever I did." And from a father to his son, "If Johnny is saved, be a good lad to God and thy mother." At Hartley, also, there is reason to believe that their melancholy end was unaccompanied with much pain, and the calm expression of their coun-

tenances, in many instances, seemed evidence of calm resignation to the will of God, who, in this heavy dispensation, and amidst the darkest shadows of death, seems to have guided them into the way of peace.

The general good character of the inhabitants of this immediate district, and the well-known religious and sober habits of the workmen, is also a subject of consolation. The patience and tranquillity which have prevailed under so terrible an ordeal cannot be thought of without admiration. What words, or what pen, can attempt to do justice to the heroic and long-continued bravery of all who were engaged in the work of attempting the delivery of the sufferers? Days and nights of hardest labour, of deepest anxiety, of almost superhuman defiance of all the perils and dangers which surrounded them—these most noble and true-hearted men devoted themselves to the work in a manner which is as far beyond the power of description as its reward is beyond all that earth can give. The blessing of Heaven, peace and comfort, and gratitude to God, will in time become the lasting impression on minds now bowed down with the weight of misery. Out of the darkness—gloomy as it is—there is yet the light of many alleviations. What kindness and sympathy was at once shown to the unfortunate men and their relatives! Our gracious Queen, in the midst of her own suffering, has been most attentive to the still greater calamity which has fallen on so many of her subjects; and repeated telegrams conveyed to the scene of misfortune the sympathy of the Royal mourner. The Bishop of Durham, many ministers of religion of various denominations, and many benevolent inhabitants of Newcastle and other districts, hastened to afford such spiritual comfort and charitable aid as the case admitted. The professional services of Mining Engineers of the district were rendered with the greatest promptitude; and it makes the heart bleed to think of the agony suffered by those more immediately connected with the works. Purely accidental as the breakage and fall of the beam appear to have been, they gave rise to a complication of distresses enough to appal the stoutest heart; and for all time to come there must remain a most melancholy remembrance of this most serious of all known colliery accidents.

It is as looking to events as they happen from day to day that we necessarily view such misfortunes. If it were possible to see the future as we may in imagination picture it forth, events, now so imperfectly known, would doubtless appear to us as the decrees of Infinite Wisdom. Extending prospective views and hopes to two or three centuries in advance, it may be found that for objects and purposes now beyond our powers of comprehension, occurrences which are now seen only in the aspect of dire calamity, have led the way to solid improvements, to important benefits, and even to blessings extending over wide regions of the earth. It is towards the possibility of improvement that these observations are chiefly directed. In the mean time, the sad features of this most deplorable calamity have caused the stream of charity to flow largely from every

corner of the land. Following the good example of the Queen, we may hope that in every home—however humble—where the cheerful warmth of coal enlivens the domestic hearth, contributions will be sent, not only in commiseration of suffering, but as offerings of gratitude for preservation from dangers and sorrows such as those which have befallen more than two hundred brave workmen, and their relatives and friends. To these afflicted homes, "soft Charity" is bringing plenteous means of relief. The blessing of God, and the healing influences of time, will restore peace to the mourners. As to those for whom they mourn—and for whom all England has mourned—the Angel of Death found them in the midst of their honest toil, in that "Place of Darkness, and in the Deep," which we may hope was to them the portal of enduring light in a world where darkness and sorrow are unknown.

CAN WRONG BE RIGHT?

A TALE.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

XXXIII.

THE tolling of the death-bell—the rumours, each contradicting the other—the surmises—the conflicting opinions—the determination of one person to believe, and another to disbelieve, whatever was reported, as the day waned—the riding and driving to and fro of messengers and carriages, servants from the Hall and to the Hall, combined at length into one appalling fact—Lady Harvey was DEAD!

The first terrible tale was, that poison, either from her own hand or forced upon her by a “foreign woman”—“during their drive from town”—had done its work;—she was dead!

Then some remembered how all her family had faded away in consumption, and recalled how thin she had grown, and what a cough she had, and how she dressed and scorned care, and that her mother died from bursting a blood-vessel while in a fit of passion. They agreed that her death might have been expected; but my landlady was inclined to believe in the poison—it fostered her constitutional hatred of foreigners. After a time she almost carried me down to her little parlour—“I looked so ill,” she said; “there I could hear the news.”

I certainly did hear all that was said in the street, as well as in the adjacent kitchen. I heard the landlady, Mrs. Burton, declare she was certain Lady Harvey had been poisoned—those foreigners always carried all manner of poisons about with them. She had forced it on her.

But this assertion was contradicted by a voice of seeming authority.

“Poison!” it exclaimed; “poison forced on Lady Harvey! It would be a rare strong hand, and a stronger will, that could force her to take anything she did not like. And in her own carriage, too! The stranger might have a hidden power over My Lady—no one can deny that; My Lady was always wild and inconsiderate—wild, girl and woman. Didn’t I live many a weary day at Mansfeld Grange? Wild, girl and woman! Ah! if any poor girl played the games she did, how soon her character would go!—God keep us all!” she added, “women especially, from sin and foreigners!”

And to this Mrs. Burton said a hearty “Amen!”

I thought it such a curious prayer—“from sin and foreigners!”—it certainly was thoroughly English.

Death, if it did not make “holiday,” made idleday. The men had no intention of going to their usual occupations. They stood about, watching for news; they swarmed around the opposite beer-house, particularly at the window, inside and outside, seated on the long stone bench, or on wooden

seats that circled the great ash, the patriarch of Brecken trees! Many a time have I sat beneath its shadow, and played at "thread-my-needle" round those very seats! But there was no "beer-shop" there in those days—the beer-shop is a modern invention to destroy the comfort of English homes. The men sat and lounged, and told each other tales of murder, and poisoning, and sudden death.

Sometimes a gentleman on horseback would come clattering down the road like a wild huntsman, reviving the excitement. Then the stately carriage of some rich neighbour bowled along. Then a post-chaise with four horses galloped through, and they said that was Sir Oswald's "man of business."

The school children were all at liberty, but even the boys were overawed. I saw them at the old sun-dial, their little brown heads clustered together like a bunch of hazel-nuts; but, after a time, the greater number disappeared—they went silently away into the woods.

The women were, one and all, pale; some as if paralyzed—dumb, except on the one subject. My landlady assumed much authority over her neighbours, who crowded the large kitchen, on the ground that Doctor Ridge (my old, kind friend) would be certain to stop there. He was to have seen her this very day; he would be sure to call on his way home; he never neglected rich or poor—certain. But when he came in, they must go out—he would surely tell her all; but he would not, of course, tell *them*—it was not to be expected; so they must go out,—and then, when he was gone, they should hear facts from her. What a patroness she was that day!

I recalled every detail of my interview with the Italian, and drew my own conclusions as to the cause of this terrible catastrophe. I know it is wicked to rejoice when a fellow-creature is summoned to appear before that dread tribunal whose verdict can only be known to us at the Great Day; and it was not joy, I hope, that throbbed in my heart. But my heart did throb—and not with pain.

I felt like a captive suddenly and mysteriously relieved from a heavy chain. I was released from my dungeon. Above all, I had a clearly-defined feeling of intense thankfulness that no act of mine had deprived *her* of the shelter of his name. Yet, mingled with all this was a terror of what was to come.

Sir Oswald had much to forgive. Would he not forgive the mother of his child for that which love for him had wrought? I would not force myself upon him. How could he look upon me without loathing? Oh! the pain, the misery of that thought! More than once I left the little parlour, to pour forth my tears and prayers. Was it wrong, was it wicked, to feel as if a miracle had been wrought in my behalf, for me and for my child—*our child*?

If the landlady would but have let me alone—left me to myself; but she would not; she had continually something fresh to tell, or to ask me

to eat something, or to wonder what could keep Doctor Ridge; and then at intervals, that bell!—Yet, had it not been for the tolling of that bell, I could not have believed in the reality of her death. And during the intervals I shivered lest—oh, Mary! but it is true—lest it should be a dream. The dream of the past night had been as vivid as the reality of that day! At last, the length of the hours became almost insupportable, and I so longing for the evening to come.

When the Doctor's carriage drew up at the door, I felt as if he came unexpectedly, and before he could enter he was surrounded by inquirers. All knew Doctor Ridge, and it was some time before Mrs. Burton was able to disentangle the kind man, and see him seated in her parlour.

I was highly favoured, for she had invited me to remain, and introduced me as "a—a lady who had some business at the Hall; but, of course, this terrible——"

Mrs. Burton knew not how to finish her sentence.

"Yes, yes," said the good man, eyeing me at the same time curiously; "yes, we have had a shock—a fearful shock; three physicians from London, besides myself—besides myself; nothing to be done—nothing. One celebrated man, whom the poor lady seems to have consulted, according to her maid's statement, frequently, without her husband's knowledge, said that for the last six months any very violent emotion might have caused this catastrophe. Poor lady! she hardly passed a day without a sufficiently 'violent emotion' to destroy life. I only wonder how it remained so long."

"Then it was not poison, Sir?" said the landlady, in a disappointed tone.

"Poison! What! has such an idea got about? Poison!"

"Then the foreign lady did not poison her?"

"The foreign lady," he repeated, growing very red, "is—a woman, or we should call her by another name. We have no hesitation in saying—(what is known to a household will be known to the county)—but we have no hesitation in saying, that the 'foreign lady,' though she did not poison her, was the immediate cause of Lady Harvey's death. There was a violent altercation in the carriage between the ladies—that is proved beyond a doubt—and the result was hæmorrhage, frightful hæmorrhage, and in a very short time, before our arrival, all was over."

And then he endeavoured to turn my landlady's attention to her own particular ailment, but Mrs. Burton did not care for that; she endeavoured to renew the subject.

"And poor Sir Oswald, Sir! he took on dreadful, some say; yet others again will have it he could not have cared for my Lady much of late. Ah! Sir, strange things are said!"

"My dear Mrs. Burton, my worthy friend and patient, did anything, however simple, *ever* happen that 'strange things' were *not* said? They know the duty of silence very imperfectly at Brecken Hall. The house-

hold has been (chiefly through that most intemperate Italian lady, whose nature seems steeped in burning jealousy) made acquainted with what we are certain Sir Oswald's noble nature would have locked within his own bosom. The terms on which my Lady and Sir Oswald lived have been for some time past the talk of the county. Poor Lady Harvey became daily more ungovernable; it is so with all who do not know how to govern themselves; but he *had* loved her, and the last half hour they tell me was terrible—terrible! And even then that woman forced herself into the room with some letters, and gave them to Sir Oswald, who threw them on the fire; and as they consumed, the poor dying lady said to him, 'Bless you, bless you!' They were her last words. Had we been there, we could have done nothing; and we are glad we were not. It was awful! That man is so noble, but so terribly proud. I wonder he survives it."

The Doctor was in such evident distress, that Mrs. Burton did not persist in her inquiries. The good old man passed his hand repeatedly across his brow, and then reverted to the landlady's own illness in his old quaint way. "We are doing nicely here, Mrs. Burton—very nicely," he said, taking her weak and weather-beaten wrist into his pale, withered hand, and *seeming*, at all events, to count the pulsations. "Ah! we are better—decidedly stronger. You must go on as usual, and as we are to be at the Hall to-morrow, we will look in. We have still a long, a very long drive, before we can get home and have a little rest. Such a night and such a day may God grant we never spend again!" The Doctor was greatly shaken.

"I have some old port, Doctor," exclaimed Mrs. Burton; "sit ye down—not five minutes—and it shall be here." She flew out of the parlour.

I rose and stood before him. "Do you know me, Doctor?"

"Know you! No, I hardly know anything. But speak again." He drew his spectacles from off his forehead, over his eyes, and holding both my hands, stared at me.

"Do you not remember *mé*, Doctor, and my baby, and the introduction you gave me to Mrs. Clary?"

"That cursed smallpox!" he exclaimed vehemently. "Yes, we inquired about you of Mrs. Clary six months ago, and she told us—we could not have believed it—my pretty, pretty patient! And the child not marked—not a dot, she said."

"Doctor!" I exclaimed,—“Doctor, tell me, only tell me, before she returns, for the sake of those you love in heaven, and who are dearest to you on earth—tell me, did Sir Oswald love Caroline Mansfeld at the last—did he? Did he believe her to be true—true to him?”

Doctor Ridge gasped as if for breath, and dropped both my hands at once.

"Love her! Believe her true! Why, no; surely not—of course, not. But what is that to you? Who are you to ask such questions? Who are you? WHAT are you?"

"Doctor Ridge, to-morrow I will tell you, when I ask you to certify the birth of my child."

"Certify the birth of your child! To *whom* am I to certify it? *Why* am I to certify it? Tales—whisperings!—Can it be possible? Mildred Kennett—drowned—not drowned—the reason!—what reason? Oh, impossible!"

"You said you would be at Brecken Hall to-morrow; either *there* or *here* I will meet you, and tell you why I ask you to certify the birth of my child."

The landlady's hand was on the latch of the door. I placed my finger on my lip. Dr. Ridge understood my meaning; but he drank the tumbler of mulled port with his eyes fixed on me, apparently not knowing what he drank.

"Was it right, Doctor—your old favourite port?" questioned Mrs. Burton.

"Mysterious—most mysterious!" he repeated, without noticing her question; then walking backward to the door, his eyes still fixed on me, he repeated twice, "but impossible! impossible!"

The good woman retired with an air of offended dignity.

"I wonder if the dear soul is going crazy, and what was 'mysterious' and 'impossible,' and why he stared at you in that manner."

To add to her perplexity, I told her I must go to Brecken Hall, and might be delayed there some little time. I hoped it would not inconvenience her.

The Doctor's carriage drove off; clouds had gathered, and heavy raindrops descended, and the mutterings of distant thunder mingled with that bell. I found myself watching for the strokes with an intenseness that was positive pain. Suddenly the thunder drew nearer; an absolute tornado burst over the village; in an instant the street was cleared; the sturdiest trees bent like wands of willow in the hands of strong men; bright masses of lightning shot through the sweeping foliage; and crash after crash echoed from the woods, as if demons sported in the whirlwind.

The storm was strong and terrible while it lasted, but it was of brief duration. Strange as it may seem, it completely revived me; and in the fresh and balmy air, purified from the heat and vapour of the day, I took my way to Brecken Hall.

The leaves were still dripping in the last rays of a golden sunset as I entered the park gates. They were unfastened, and the lodges at each side were untenanted. Though *in the flesh* I had never, as I have told you, been in the interior of the Hall, yet as the villagers since the "proud Lady Harvey's" death had permission on stated days to "enjoy" the park, I knew every turn and winding of its paths.

I knew what I was called on to do,—I thought I was sufficiently prepared to have gone on amid the glory of that sunset, and to have entered my husband's presence without any protracted tarrying. But I had mis-

calculated my strength, and was compelled to wait for twilight. I could not meet him in the garish light. The wilderness, the flower-gardens, the overshadowed parts of the plantations, were damp and deserted; but without guide or thought, I entered a little summer-house. You know it, Mary—you know how carefully it is preserved, and called 'Grandmamma's Rest'—(it is on the very corner of the terrace, and commands the very beautiful vale beneath, and the bow windows of the library). The window had been throw up from the ground, and I could hear the distant hum of voices from within. Then Sir Oswald and a gentleman came out, and, pacing a few yards backward and forward, talked earnestly together. At last they shook hands; both walked to the window, shook hands again, and the stranger passed onward. Sir Oswald continued walking, his head bent, his arms folded. After a time—the moon, I noticed, was rising, like a globe of pale gold, above the trees—he advanced, and leant upon the stone balustrade of the terrace. He continued there without motion a long, long time—then turning slowly, he entered the library.

I followed. I knew I had an expiatory offering to make, but how would it be received? Would it be mercifully accepted, or would the altar and the sacrifice be overthrown, scattered to the winds, trampled under foot? God help me! it was a fearful trial. I stood for more than a minute just within the window, before Sir Oswald saw me. He did not question, but looked at me in evident astonishment.

I advanced.

A lamp on the table was alight, and my veil was thrown back; so that, after a moment, he recognized me as the mother of the boy whose life he had saved.

One idea only was connected in his mind with that event, and he said, "You have come at an ill time—surely you must have heard: what can you need to intrude on me at such a time?" He paused.

Again I advanced.

"You must have heard"—hereafter he would see me.

I made another step towards him.

"Surely," he repeated, "at such a time—I ought to be free from intrusion."

The door was close to where I stood. Without turning round, I locked it; and then I raised my eyes to meet his, and gazed my very soul into them—sinking the while meekly on my knees before him.

How long this lasted I could not tell.

"Oh, God!—oh, God! Am I mad—am I mad?" came hurriedly from his lips; and as he drew nearer to me, I could no longer endure his gaze; but while I bent my head to the ground before him, I extended one hand—the hand on which he had placed the ring. Both rings were there—the little golden circle, and its diamond keeper—the only jewels I had retained. He grasped my hand tightly in his—he drew me by it to the lamp—he bent over it.

"Mildred!—the rings—the hand! Mildred's hand!—But"—he shook his head while glancing at my face—he forced back my bonnet and touched my hair—raised me from the ground and placed me in a chair, he standing, and repeating—"Mildred—Mildred! Mildred in this world's life! Then the cruel thought of that wild Italian had a foundation; yet *she* did not believe it; thank God for that! There was enough to weigh down her poor soul without her being—" I wonder the look which filled up that pause did not kill me—"being—what you made her; and, what have you not made me?"

"My sin—my sin!" I repeated, "not yours; God sees—God knows—God judges righteously—the sin was mine, not yours."

"The waters to return their dead! So changed too—so changed!"

Yes—that was it—"So changed!"

He took my hand again (oh! how his trembled), peering curiously at the rings, and then pushed back my sleeve. There was a mark there. My grandmother, in Old World reading, called it a "strawberry," and Sir Oswald, once giving me a bracelet, said "it was to hide the strawberry."

"Yes! Mildred!" And then, in a moment, his pale face flushed—cheek, brow, one crimson glow.

"The child! the boy!" he exclaimed.

"Your child! your boy!" I said. "Your child!"

XXXIV.

I do not think that either Sir Oswald or I ever knew whether it was day or night. Half-sitting, half-kneeling at his feet, I went back, at his command, to the night at the Italian village, where I had been seen no more. I went back still further—to the night of the fire. I reminded him how he had left me to perish, and saved *her*. I said how, in life, I had but one object—his happiness; that I then had conclusive proof of his love for her, and I resolved to sacrifice myself so that he might be free and happy!

I felt for an instant his hand on my head while I said this; but it was hastily withdrawn, and he muttered that my letter had said so much. I told him how I hung above the river,—how I was prevented, by a merciful Power, from rushing unbidden into my Maker's presence; how, still firm to my purpose of securing his happiness, seeing that my very life was of no account with him, I determined to let him think I had gone to death, as I had resolved to trouble him no more.

I told him of my mountain wanderings, of my illness in the convent, where the Italian woman, now in the house, was at that time a pupil. This I had to repeat more than once. I said how my needle-craft won me such admiration; but that soon, very soon, I discovered I should become a mother! Of course, the sudden question came, "Why had I not written?"

I told him I had, and how all communication with the outer world had been cruelly cut off from me; but that at length, through the good offices of that same Italian girl, I escaped, she making me the partner of her elopement with the man Carlo, now also his guest; that I saw them married, but that he would not suffer us to proceed together, and I made my way as best I could to England, believing I should arrive in time to prevent his marriage, and existing in the hope that, as the mother of his child, I should find favour in his eyes.

"Ah!" he said, "you mistook the momentary return of a passion for its eternity. I was fast learning to love you!"

Oh! for the love without the learning! I could not help murmuring that the fire had burnt a contrary belief into my heart.

He told me to continue my narrative.

I did so. I travelled over again my rapid journey from Dover to Brecken. I recalled to his mind that particular day at the small town where first I learned I was too late: that he had married in about four months after my supposed death. I did not mean this as a reproach, but I saw he felt it so. I told him how I had observed them both: and how they drove on in their full happiness, while I was insensible. I told him Doctor Ridge was with me during my time of trial—in that house—that night!

"And knew you not?"

"How could he? He had never before seen me." I reminded him of my being so unfortunate in the House of Commons as to attract his attention, when all I had desired was to hear his voice once more! I told him how I had worked; how my boy had grown; how I rejoiced that the disease, which seized upon us both in the same hour, had left him without spot or blemish; and how I was educating myself to educate him—resolved that, when acknowledged, he should be worthy of the name he bore; I added, that oft-times the struggle to hush my mother-duty, and maintain my resolve not to disturb his happiness, was almost more than I could bear.

Sir Oswald, in a cold, low voice, observed, "There had been no need for such a struggle; I was his wife—the mother of his son."

I longed for a word or two of sympathy from him; but he coldly bade me "go on."

In broken accents, I told him of my agony when led to believe that, after all, my sacrifice had produced no fruit.

No word from him, but a stifled groan.

I entreated him to imagine what I had felt at Twickenham, when nature asserted her right, and drew father and son together.

No word—no sign—his hand pressed on his eyes, *to shut me out*. I told him of the Italian's visit, proceeding solely, from her having recognized my needlework which I had left upon the bank, and her entreaty that I would give my testimony to prove her marriage.

"Did she say nothing—nothing—about the domestic state of Brecken Hall?"

"She gave me reason to believe its master was unhappy."

"Nothing more?"

"Yes; she gave me great pain."

"Did she—did she offer *proof* of the truth of her statements?" he inquired, in a voice trembling with pride and passion.

"She did; she offered me letters."

"And—you—read—them?"

He spoke slowly and bitterly, pausing between each word.

"No!" I said; and I rose up and stood before him; for my blood boiled with indignation that he—*he*, should suppose me capable of so base an act.

"No, Sir Oswald,—no! I have been guilty of a grievous sin. Devoting myself to a life of labour, instead of a life of wealth and luxury, was nothing—no faithful heart ever weighed *that* for a moment; but I placed my idol between me and my God—I buried myself at your feet, without thought of resurrection. Unless I could recall the past, I cannot recall this sin. It was all *wrong*, and it cannot come *right*; and the bitter—the bitterest—punishment, even at this moment, is, that the result to you, for whose dear sake I offered up this unholy sacrifice, has been a thousand times worse than to me. It was the insanity of a loving woman; and a woman who could do what I have done could not descend to a mean or unworthy act—could not even *look* upon those letters."

He had pity on me then; and in his calm, just voice, he asked me to forgive him. He said, what he had said once before, I had more than *that* to forgive. "He had made me the innocent instrument of his revenge;" adding, with deep emotion, "and all this for a woman who never cared for me but as the minister of her caprice." And then he suddenly inquired where was the boy, and what I had called him?

"Oswald!"

He said, "It is well."

I reminded him that when, last night, I arrived in the village, I was ignorant of all, now too well known—that the Italian's statement had determined me to delay no longer, but to see him at once.

"Did the Italian know that you were?"—and he hesitated; it must have been so strange to say it then, but he did—"that you were Lady Oswald? or did she make her own keen conjecture?"

"No; could he suppose I would have told her? I hoped hereafter he would question her as to what she knew of me."

I said this all too proudly. I thought Sir Oswald should have taken my sorrow and sufferings into account, and warmed towards his boy. I did not think as I ought to have done of his outraged feelings, and how his pride must have risen against the *cause* of such indignity—such betrayal of honour. I ought to have waited until he had overcome the

shock of the past hours—the disappointment and disgust which the perusal of my scarred features must have given him. Man seldom values the love, no matter how devoted, that troubles him; and what a curse mine had wrought him! What could I have expected? Oh! I was cruelly unreasonable—shamefully unjust.

I added something about Doctor Ridge's kindness, and that I had promised him this evening to solve the mystery in which he found me. Doctor Ridge had abundant means of knowing what my life had been since my child's birth.

Sir Oswald took my hand. If mine was cold, I am sure *his* must have been colder.

"Mildred," he said, "whatever our future may be, believe this,—I can never doubt your honour."

There was a knock at the Library door. I knew not what was wanted; but Sir Oswald said he would go at once.

"One moment!" I exclaimed. "I come not here to-night with even a wish that you should daily see before you the blighted face that once was Mildred's. Some time since I reconciled myself to this affliction, in the faith that, unrecognized, I might devise some means of being near you—my boy winning your favour, growing into your heart, until a good time came when you would know him as your son!—a dream! a dream!—but *now* all I desire is to give him to you, and to leave you."

He looked me stedfastly in the face.

"I will not," he said, "ask you to spare yourself this fearful emotion, because you do not understand what 'self' means; but I ask you to spare *me*—spare me, to-night. Let us not speak of the future just now—all is confused!"

"Confused," I repeated, "but not obscure. Even now I read your resolve."

"I will return," he said.

I did not dare to wait—I could not! With a trembling hand, I wrote on a slip of paper my address at the village. Then, hastily pacing the terrace, I plunged into the wood, and soon arrived at the Inn.

XXXV.

I WANTED my child. Every moment of his absence seemed an age. My boy—my boy! I wrote to Mrs. Dunbar to bring him at once to Brecken. I did not even sign my own name until I knew Sir Oswald's pleasure. All day—all day—I watched and waited for a message from the Hall.

None came; and it was long past noon—a grave, still day, without breeze or sunshine.

It is wonderful how rapidly an excitement expires. The village so ruffled, so unlike itself yesterday, to-day was about its work,—the only

news of the morning being, that the family vault of the Harveys was not to be opened, as "My Lady" was to be buried at Mansfeld.

The person aggrieved by this intelligence was the village bricklayer and stonemason, who had made ready, in the church, to open "the last house."

My landlady added, that it was a blessing My Lady's father was dead.

I thought so, too!

I was in a state of the most helpless anxiety. I recalled every word and look of Sir Oswald. They yielded me small matter for hope. If he could not love me as a bride, how could he love me now?—and, like thousands of others, I cast my burden, at the last, where I should have cast it at the first. I could not define what I had expected, after my confession, and at such a time; but I sat at the little window of my bedroom with an utterly crushed spirit. There was no strength left for either despair or hope. At last I saw Doctor Ridge's carriage a long way off,—it came from the Hall. I supposed he had gone thither by the back road. I heard him talking to Mrs. Burton for a few—it could only have been a few—minutes, though to me it seemed an age; his step came slowly up the stairs, and he stayed a moment outside the door—then knocked. I said, "Come in," and advanced to meet him. He made me a little formal bow. I held out my hand: he just touched it, "and bowed upon it," in the old-fashioned way you read about in old novels—if, indeed, old novels are ever read. I *saw* that Sir Oswald had told him all; and in his first sentence he called me "Lady Harvey."

Dear, kind friend! We both sat looking at each other; not so much for lack of words as from not knowing how to place them. At last he uttered a few disjointed sentences—broken and abrupt, yet full of heart and wisdom.

"Yes, yes; we have known women do strange things from excess of love; and I can understand how, in the very anguish of enthusiastic devotion, a woman dies for a man, and is done with it: but to yield up a husband she adores to another, and live on—Madam! We don't understand it. It is beyond nature—quite beyond nature! and it is against God's law. But we beg your pardon, Lady Harvey. You yourself know best what you have suffered; *we* know what Sir Oswald has endured. Sir Oswald is proud and sensitive—not well either, just now, and, consequently, cannot appreciate the value of the seed while the bitterness of the fruit is on his lips. Eh! we remember the day so well! Little did we think, when that dear babe was born, that he was the heir of Brecken Hall. Oh, if you had but confided in us!"

"Sir Oswald was happy then—my sacrifice was to secure his happiness."

I could but repeat the story you have heard so often, Mary.

I had had nothing else to tell.

"Alas! Madam, was there but one soul to save? Persistence in the sacrifice was both the wonder and—pardon us—the crime. The Indian woman on the funeral pyre is nothing to it! We are thankful to have lived to see such a wife; but we hope never to see such another—never! Sir Oswald desired we would say, that while Brecken Hall is tenanted as it now is, your presence there is impossible: but Sir Oswald wishes you to be more worthily lodged than you are at present, and has done us the honour to propose that you accept the shelter of our house until after the funeral. He wishes you to send for our young friend (if we may have the privilege so to call him); and desired us also to present you this, and to say he was grieved last night, when he returned to the library, to find you gone."

"Did Sir Oswald say '*grieved*,' Doctor Ridge?"

"Yes—no. We beg Lady Harvey's pardon—he said '*surprised*.'"

The envelope contained a never-wanting proof of my husband's liberality; but no written word—no word!—not one!

"Sir Oswald also wished me to say," resumed the Doctor, "that this morning he arranged with his solicitors that the Italians should immediately quit Brecken Hall. But, in gratitude for the service the lady has rendered you, Sir Oswald will make her independent of one of the most cold-blooded scoundrels that ever disgraced humanity."

"Oh, may God bless his noble heart!" I exclaimed; "how grateful she must be!"

"We don't know," replied the Doctor, calmly. "We are old, and thought we understood human nature; but we may not have read woman rightly. She *ought* to have been grateful, and rejoiced, heart and soul, in her independence; but she flung herself into Carlo's arms, vowed she loved him more than her life, and would never leave him."

My poor landlady's perplexity was distressing; but, with all her boasting, she was too much in awe of Doctor Ridge to do more than silently observe his deferential manner to me, and show how readily she adopted it by a most respectful curtsy. As we drove off, another note to Mrs. Dunbar told where she was to bring my boy.

"What! not to the old house, Doctor?"

"No, Madam; Sir Oswald did not think it good enough for us: though such is the effect of uprooting an old tree, that this is the first day we have felt sufficiently grateful for the change. It will be more fitting for Lady Harvey than the old one could have been made, and we are nearer to the Hall by two miles."

The first day of my residence there was very dreary. The "Pink" looked fresher than ever; she could not have been more attentive than she had been in old times, but now she curtsied with every sentence, and backed out of the room, pausing to make her last curtsy the most respectful of all. Doctor Ridge was out all day.

Nothing fresh from Brecken Hall.

In the evening the Doctor told me that Sir Oswald had been much occupied with his solicitors, cancelling the deeds of settlement, and preparing to refund the receipts of the Mansfeld property during the last few years. "Last night," continued Doctor Ridge, "he accompanied 'the remains' to Mansfeld Grange, where they await the arrival of the astonished heir-at-law, who would see them deposited in the family vault. Of course," he added, "'The Romance of the Hall' is the theme of conversation everywhere. We dread its getting into the county papers." And the dear, good man—as if I did not know it—repeated, "And he *is* so proud!—he *is* so proud!"

It would be as tedious as useless to attempt to chronicle my feelings.

The next day, when Doctor Ridge returned from his "rounds," I presented my child to him. Mrs. Dunbar was slow, I thought, in comprehending the mystery; but she did so at last, and then wept with me. Her calm, clear nature saw I had, neither by divine nor moral law, any right to make such a sacrifice.

How the dear old man exulted over my child!—"the miniature of Sir Oswald"—how he caressed him! how he fed him, reproving me all the time for doing so! how he gave him his way in all things, even to the extent of being harnessed with a cord and playing at "horse" in the drawing-room, descanting on the necessity of not permitting children to have their own way, because of the suffering it entailed on themselves and others hereafter! That was a happy evening. For years afterwards, my happiness came only with the memory of that evening.

No message from Sir Oswald.

The next day the Doctor returned earlier than usual from his rounds—"To-morrow," said he, "the funeral is to take place."

"Might I hope to see Sir Oswald after that?"

I asked the question meekly and tremblingly.

Dr. Ridge was confused, and looked it. "He could not say what Sir Oswald's intentions were. One or two friends who dared to speak to him had entreated that he would do nothing rashly. He was of such value as a public man, both to his country and his party—he was bound to such important movements next session—and by that time the nine days' wonder would have passed." He paused.

I ventured to ask what it was Sir Oswald wished to do?

"We do not think," replied the Doctor, "that he knows himself. One thing only is determined—he must go abroad for a time. But we fear he will vacate his seat in Parliament; and, if it be possible to cut off the entail, he—but—we hope that is by no means determined on—he is impressed with a wild desire to sell Brecken Hall—Brecken Hall, quite five hundred years in the family!" There was a long pause. "Madam," he said at last, "you must let me take the boy there to-morrow."

I had never known how deeply, deeply dear, my boy was to me until

that moment. I could hardly restrain the denial that hung upon my lips. Yet I had schooled myself for the separation I knew was at hand.

"Has Sir Oswald said so?"

"No, Madam, he has not. Madam, the presence of that child may preserve its father. It will be a new object—a new duty—a new affection. He has seen, admired, and loves him; but I read that he thinks it cruel to take him from a *widowed mother*!"

I did not start at the words, though I perfectly understood their meaning.

"His child will be to Sir Oswald a fresh existence. Five minutes after he enters the room, Sir Oswald will sooner cut off his right hand than deprive him of his ancestral home."

"He shall go," I said; "but, Doctor, not before noon. It is a long drive for the little fellow before his dinner. Just about four—would four do?"

I saw tears in the old man's eyes. "I am certain Sir Oswald will let me bring him back, if you wish it."

"No, Doctor, he must not return. It is so best. You are right. Oh, blessed knowledge! 'The presence of the child may preserve the father!' Even if I had the freshest face that ever met the morning, how could he endure my presence? But I give him my child—mine only for to-night! Now, leave me, Doctor; I cannot bear another word."

As soon as my boy slept, I was beside him. I could neither weep nor pray. I could only look at him. I sat there through the night, yet the time seemed but as an hour; and at daybreak I cut off a long silky curl—the curl you have often seen, Mary. If the night seemed short, what did the day? Daybreak and evening were blended together. The child's innocent delight at the proposed drive, his bound into the carriage, and his entreaty that I would go with him, were all trials which only a mother can understand. My darling child! I had no tears to shed. The heir of Brecken Hall! He looked glorious enough to be the heir of an empire; but *I* was widowed—and childless!

XXXVI.

YES! I had spun my own winding-sheet; and now—how to wear it?

Oh, the loving tenderness of my two friends! Doctor Ridge understood me better than did Mrs. Dunbar, who pined after the boy unceasingly. The Doctor repeated over and over again how Sir Oswald kissed him, and how the child hung on him—and how the lawyer, who had been pondering over the title-deeds of Brecken Hall, under Sir Oswald's strict command, to discover some means of getting rid of a place which had become to him "accursed," leant back in his chair, and smiled regretfully as lawyers do when the prospect, far or near, of much law and little justice melts into "thin air."

For, with his eyes on his child, Sir Oswald said that Mr. Turnstile might lay by those title-deeds for the present; he must think over the question of selling Brecken before any steps could be taken in so important a matter.

But steps, and rapid ones, were taken in other matters.

Sir Oswald Harvey accepted the Chiltern Hundreds.

Sir Oswald Harvey was *gone* abroad.

Yes, it was best and right: I had no reason to complain—it was right. But I was human: the heart of wife and mother beat against my bosom. Yet, as far as present life and sympathy went, I was a husbandless wife—a childless mother. I sometimes felt rebellion stir within me, and an evil influence whispered, “It is justice without mercy”—but I had strength to strike it down, and banish it. I knew it was best, much best, that I should see neither husband nor child for a long, long, long time. I kept on repeating to myself, “It is best,”—“it is best.” For nights I never closed my eyes; my eyelids were rigid, and would not close.

Mrs. Dunbar said my calmness terrified her; and Doctor Ridge harrowed up my very soul in vain efforts to make me weep. He repeated, over and over again, all about the young physician, one of his own dear pupils, who was gone with Sir Oswald, and would take care of those precious lives, and attend to my boy’s education; and that Sir Oswald had said the child’s first letter was to be to me. How frequently he repeated *that*! Then he roused me to attend to the duties of my new state.

I was obliged to receive the lawyer. I was told of a “settlement” on me—bewildering from its amount—and that I could reside at Brecken, or Ilford (the shooting-lodge we had gone to after our marriage), or in Grosvenor Place.

I would have preferred remaining with Doctor Ridge; but he said I must not forget I was the wife of Sir Oswald Harvey. I must keep up his position in his absence, and attend to his interests. That was a powerful argument against the lethargy into which I might have fallen.

Keep up Sir Oswald’s position, and attend to his interests during his absence!—“His interests,” which were my child’s interests—the interests of both combined. Mrs. Dunbar endeavoured to awaken me to the privileges, the duties, the responsibilities of my “station.”

How I hated the word!

Mary, imagine, if it be possible, my complete isolation. It seemed as if Doctor Ridge and Mrs. Dunbar had receded from me almost to the confines of another world. I valued them highly; but my heart yearned for the companionship and sympathy from which I was cut off by my own act. The consequences that followed were perfectly natural and just—yes, just. Perhaps I sometimes felt that my youth had been blighted by *his* act—he took me as the instrument of his revenge. But

—HAD I NOT LOVED HIM?—was it not my glory to minister—ay, even to his vengeance?

May no woman love as I loved! for it was idolatry—unreasoning idolatry—and brought its punishment.

Weeks, months, and years rolled away. Time did its work, and taught me my duties. And though Time made both the Doctor and Mrs. Dunbar look older, he had no power over that portion of their being which belongs to Eternity. I have frequently found winter snow upon a bed of violets! I know many a white head associated with a heart as fresh as if it had not numbered twenty summers!

As years passed on I frequently heard from my boy; and I enjoyed the privilege of doing, both at Ilford and Brecken Hall, exactly what I knew Sir Oswald would have desired. As time went by, and the romance, the censure, the curiosity, or the sympathy attached to me mouldered into tradition, I was "visited," and could have done more than "return calls" if it had pleased me; but my cross was too heavy to bear in the sunshine of society. I had the blessings of the poor, and the certainty that, through my means, a moral and intellectual improvement was progressing among the people that would elevate them in Sir Oswald's eyes, and render them more capable of appreciating him. My desire has ever been to build up, not to pull down.

I often thought within myself, "How long, O Lord! how long?" but I kept silence.

Doctor Ridge one day, with great triumph, brought me a book which he said had created a very extraordinary excitement in Germany (where Sir Oswald resided). No one there knew the author. HE DID; and so did Lady Harvey!

I grasped it with a delight to which my heart had long been a stranger; but when I opened it I was disappointed—it was in German, of which I knew not a word.

"Of course," I said, "it would be immediately translated?"

"Probably; but its original strength—its force—would be lost by translation."

The next day I was in London. Whenever there, even for a day, I saw Mrs. Clary, to whom I had long since consigned the superintendence of my wardrobe, stipulating for perpetual mourning, as rich as she pleased in texture, but plainly made. I went to her *then* for an especial purpose. I engaged a German governess, and in four months I read and appreciated the force and beauty of the book. In six months I was also able to write to my boy in German, which had become almost his native language.

In his letters to me there was no mention of his father, and, therefore, I never wrote even the name that was beating with every pulsation of my heart.

I suggested to Dr. Ridge what had been long struggling in my mind, and have never forgotten the alarmed expression of his kind face.

"Would it not be better if I resided abroad, and Sir Oswald and his son returned to England?"

"Oh, Madam! let us hope that you have not founded any plan on that idea. Keep quiet, my lady; let us entreat you to continue a blessing to all within your sphere! Have patience, gentle lady—have patience! If Sir Oswald thought such a change desirable, he would communicate it at once. Oh! dear Lady Harvey, do not romance again!"

I told him I never intended again to act without Sir Oswald's sanction; but dear Dr. Ridge had a troubled look for weeks after that suggestion—indeed, he never seemed quite assured as to what I might or might not do. "Ah! dear lady," he would say, "I pray night and morning that every woman's strength and patience may increase as she grows older; but I say double prayers for you, dear Lady Harvey—double prayers for you!"

Good old man! I needed those prayers, and the prayers of all good Christians.

I always felt constrained during my residence at Brecken Hall—my visits were strictly duty visits. I could not do much there—all had been so well cared for. Mrs. Burton, when I called at the little inn, curtsied respectfully, and at last would burst into tears as she took my extended hand. Poor Mrs. Burton! I always thought her tears physical rather than mental.

I generally met Mr. Turnstile at Brecken Hall. I did not like him to enter the sanctuary of Ilford. He startled me violently once, by saying that every fact regarding the inheritance was made so clear, by the depositions taken at the Italian convent, that, in the event of Sir Oswald's death, there could be no dispute as to the rightful heir. Imagine a man telling *me* this, and adding, that he did so "to set my mind at rest!" I never had a moment's *unrest* on the subject!

I could have struck him to the earth when he spoke of the event of Sir Oswald's death!

There was but one creature in the world I avoided more than I did Mr. Turnstile, and that was the old sexton of Brecken church.

Time wore on. Ilford, under my care, grew into great beauty. I often wondered when my boy would be sent to one of the Universities; but it could hardly be time yet, and I was hardened in patience. Again the same thing—and again; time rolling on, giving no sign of pity or pardon from HIM. I had fits of positive despair, believing that all the world was stone, and that a river of fire was running through my own heart!

How was it that I had dared to wrench the command of God and man to my own purpose—to overturn the table of the law, and look for peace, and love, and joy, as the fruit of my outrage on my husband—on *THAT* woman—and on society?

Has any one ever dared this without punishment? An evil act consecrates the best motive.

Did I tell you that I went to meet the Italian in London, to establish by my evidence her marriage? But there came as clear proof that Carlo had been previously married to a French lady, whose accommodating silence endured as long as he could pay for it. The priest I had seen was a real priest, and the ceremony—but under the circumstances it was nought. Sir Oswald's bounty was so entirely hers, that the "Count" (who had been simply the pet *tenore* of the Conservatoire at Milan), finding she hardened her heart against him, returned to his legal wife, who in her turn repudiated him. By this time her indignation had worn itself out, and the still lovely and infatuated creature received her "Carlo" again; and wrote me, saying she had paid her last quarter's annuity for a dispensation, and that Carlo was the "soul of her affections."

Soon after, news came that he had been assassinated in a small Italian town, where they had given a concert; and, after the lapse of some years—spent I know not how—she again wrote me a farewell, having entered a convent. This last letter came long after your birth, my own Mary. Pardon my lingering—I will now continue.

We (Mrs. Dunbar and I) were at Ilford. I had returned from the infant school, in which I delighted, and Mrs. Dunbar was reading out to me a list of books for the lending library connected with the schools, when we heard a carriage stop at the gate, and then wind along the avenue. The morning-room did not command a view of the entrance. Suddenly the door was flung open.

"Mother!"

All my memories were uprooted in an instant. I had no child; but it was a beautiful youth that clasped me in his arms and called me "Mother!" I could hardly believe my senses. I had frequently pictured him; but no picture my fancy painted was like my living son! MY SON!—so like, yet so unlike, his father! Smaller, with a brighter, a more mirthful expression, than ever moved his father's noble features; and so much light and sunshine about his eyes and brow!

We both forgot dear Mrs. Dunbar; but at last I looked for and found her. She had fainted.

"Is there no one you would ask for, mother?"

"Sir Oswald—is he well?"

Oh, how my boy's brow clouded. "No, he is not," and he looked anxiously in my face; "for some months—for a year—he has been ill at times, and much changed; but he would not have you told—he thought he should get better. He could not bear the idea of returning to England, but the physicians said his native air may restore him."

"Native air! Is he in England?"

"At Brecken Hall. We arrived there last night. I came thence this morning. He bade me say you sent me to him as an olive-branch; the branch has grown, and at last blossomed. Will you come with it to Brecken Hall?"

And then Doctor Ridge entered. He was so overcome, he could say but little; and I—oh! how I hoped against hope! I could not believe in any danger to affect life—I, who had seen Sir Oswald so ill, yet restored in one month. In three months he would be well as ever.

But when I knelt beside his sofa in the Library, and saw his face so changed, and felt the bony pressure of his hand—oh, my heart-ache! my heart-ache! It was long, long before he spoke; but he held my hands firmly—his eyes bent on the ground. At last he said, "Mildred, the time has arrived when we must forgive each other." How generous was that to *me*!—to *ME*! And then he lifted up my face between his hands, and pushed back my hair, and smiled.

"Mildred, there are no scars to be seen now. Time has effaced them. My poor Mildred!"

Mary, I cannot bear to write the hard words he heaped upon himself, making his marriage a bitter wrong to the schoolmaster's daughter!

"No, no," said he; "my madness was born of revenge—yours of blind and blinding idolatry. I sacrificed you—you sacrificed yourself. Both were contrary to God's law; and both brought punishment to both."

Let me turn from those months, those years of hopes and fears, for a brief moment.

The romance of my life ended with the death of that most beautiful and most unhappy woman, and I pass rapidly over the realities that followed. You have often heard of your grandfather's lingering illness; you recollect your father's devotion to that gift which—for better or worse, who can tell?—for it was God's gift—rendered him careless of all things else. The pride and impatience of his childhood yielded to the influence his father at once obtained and held over him; but Sir Oswald loved music himself with too deep and earnest an enthusiasm not to appreciate his son's rare talent.

Living as they did in the loftiest and purest musical atmosphere, it was no wonder that the boy's ardent nature concentrated itself upon sweet sounds, and that the learning, the duties, the ambition, forming part and parcel of his birthright, became irksome to him, particularly so as at that time music in England was not comprehended as it is at present—and if a country gentleman could sing a hunting-song, he was considered as highly skilled in music as a gentleman ought to be.

Your father turned from the hunting-song as he did from the hunting field. He had no political bias—no ambition for public life. His music rendered him popular at Oxford; but he achieved none of the honours of his University.

While on his couch of prolonged suffering, Sir Oswald felt that his son, whom he loved with the deepest affection, would never fill the place he himself had rashly abandoned in his county. This chafed and distressed him; but all was forgotten when the boy's fingers pressed the keys

of his organ, and his matchless voice poured forth the immortalities of Handel or Haydn.

Ah! me, my Mary! I saw but too clearly that those who have the noble birthright of Englishmen should not pass the impressible morning of their days amid foreign influences. How much that is solid—how much that is endearing and enduring—is sacrificed to attain an accent, or perfect an accomplishment!

The passing hours were freighted with the consciousness of the one heavy sorrow that my act had exiled my dear ones at a period when they should have been in the home of their ancestors!

Dear, faithful Doctor Ridge, and other helpless doctors with great names, held frequent consultations: but their varied opinions merged into one. They all said that the cause of Sir Oswald's fading was evident. "His feelings had been too intense—his brain overworked." "Great and active minds were subject to this infidelity of the brain." No: nothing could be done. The disease flourished and triumphed only in the richest soil. It must take its course. Oh, Mary, can you conceive the utter and entire wretchedness of so terrible a verdict?

They sought to comfort me by the assurance of "no immediate danger."

Days, weeks, months flew with the rapidity of moments. I dared not think upon their fleeting.

Sometimes his mind would return, as if from a far-off country, and re-invigorate the body; he would arise in his old glory, and state a great fact, elucidate its truth, and overthrow its opponents—but that always harmed him. He would fade again into forgetfulness of the past. It was the rapid sunset without the hues that promise a glorious sunrise.

Gradually, however, Sir Oswald ceased to care for the things of this world, or the people thereof. He was without power, but he was without pain, and I could not bear even his son to note the increasing obscurity of his great mind. I would suffer no one but Dr. Ridge to approach him: I seldom needed sleep or rest: my all of life was to minister to his wants.

I knew the lamp was brilliant still, though I saw not its beams. It shone on another land, as the sun and moon do when we are in darkness. There were sometimes flashes of the old light; and the sound of the organ stealing through the door, particularly in the twilight, never failed to recall his spirit to its earthly home. His shadowy hand would mark the time on the coverlet, and frequently he would whisper through a movement, commanding forth my voice to swell the melody.

Yet those weeks and months—that daily and nightly service—brought to me an earthly HEAVEN.

He was all mine now—ALL MINE! If I had broken down in my watching, he must have perished. He would take nothing but from my hand: medicine—food—Mildred must give it. Mildred must read to

him. He would oft-times commence repeating that beautiful psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd;" and when his memory failed, press my hand that I might continue it. Mildred must make his bed and smooth his pillows; and he would sometimes push them from him, and have no pillow but her bosom.

When he did not call me "Mildred," he called me "Blessing!" and once he said, "My wife—not to be taken from me on earth or in heaven!"

And at last, and in his extreme weakness, the wonderful light returned to his eyes, and he said—

"Pray for me—pray for me—my love, my wife, my Blessing!"

That is all.

And yet not all; for well I know that the Removal called Death brought him nearer to me, and made me dearer to him. I have the continual consciousness of his presence—permitted most, when I need it most, to soothe, aid, and guide me! I know him to have strengthened me while writing the story which you, dear Mary, have read!

Well; you may smile! I but record my own faith in a great and ever-fruitful blessing. And, for the deep love I bear you, pray that hereafter you may feel the same influence—if it increase your happiness as surely it has increased mine. But God knows best who needs and who does not need—what is needed, and what is not needed, more than the written Word in which you trust, nothing doubting!

Your father, my Mary, married young, and your sweet child-mother but smiled on you, and—died.

You remember your dear father—his pure and spotless life, his lovingness, his charity; a *courtly* gentleman in all things; idolized by the poor, but unsatisfactory (as a *county* gentleman) to the rich. He was utterly without the talents which beget ambition; next to music he desired ease, and wished me to manage all things as I had done during their long absence abroad. I thus became what you, my darling, have only known me—a calm concentrated woman of business, the Etna in my heart burnt out, and the lava overgrown by the utilities of life. I saw how impossible it was to change my son's nature, or his habits, and I set myself the task of promoting, as far as a woman could, all that my husband's approval had sanctified. You remember your dear father's fragile beauty, and how, in the early stage of manhood, he was called from us, his passion for sweet sounds governing him to the last. He truly made

"A swan-like end,
Fading in music."

You can remember also the snowy locks, the cheerful voice, the tender blessings, of your very old godfather, Doctor Ridge; and how you have

often delighted to tease the patient lovingness of a certain "Granny Dunbar," who shared with me the natural cares and anxieties belonging to my position as sole guardian to my grand-daughter—Mary Oswald Harvey.

On you, my darling, now rest the honours and the hopes of a noble House. The world will think of that when they look upon you; but the schoolmaster's daughter sees in you far more than "storied urn or animated bust" can tell. To her your voice is as the echo of that which long ago struck upon her heart in her father's school-room. Your eyes are of his colour; your hair of the same hue, and curls as did his whose form will be her last earthly memory. In all things you—my heart's darling—are the faint sweet echo of what he was, an echo at times, as if from another world—nothing more, but oh! so sweet!

Dear Mary—beloved child—hope of my narrowing future—I would not have chronicled these memories, but that I desired you should know the facts of what might hereafter be repeated to you or to your children as the Romance of Brecken Hall.

I need not tag a moral to my tale. If the records I have written have not taught it, my story has been told in vain:

WRONG CAN NEVER BE RIGHT!

THE END.

HYACINTHINE LOCKS.

BY SIR J. EMERSON TENNENT, K.C.S., LL.D., &c.

MILTON, in the glowing description which he has given of the newly-created parents of mankind as they first appeared in Paradise, dwells with intuitive discrimination on the respective characteristics of their hair, as distinguishing the sex of each. As to Adam,—

"His fair large front and eye sublime declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering; but not below his shoulders broad.
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
Her unadorned golden tresses wore,
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved,
As the vine curls her tendrils."

—B. iv., v. 300.

I have generally found it hastily assumed that Milton introduced the term "hyacinthine" in this place to indicate colour,¹ and to mark the contrast between the darkness of Adam's hair and the fairness of Eve's, which in the succeeding line he describes as "golden." This construction, if it did not originate with Pope, has certainly been perpetuated by him; for, in his translation of one of those passages in the *Odyssey* in which Homer describes the hair of Ulysses, he has made him say,—

"Back from his brows in wavy ringlets fly
His thick large locks of hyacinthine dye."²

But as the most frequent tinge of the hyacinth is blue, an epithet derived from its hue would be more appropriately applied to the eyes,³ and in this sense Milton's introduction of it would be incongruous in relation to hair. This difficulty it has been attempted to obviate by the suggestion that the blue of the hyacinth is sometimes so dark and intensely deep, as to be nearly undistinguishable from black.⁴ And as the Greeks applied the term "κύανος" *cyaneus*, which they probably borrowed from

¹ Thus "*Hyacinthine*" is explained in RICHARDSON'S *English Dictionary* to mean "formed of, or having the colour of the hyacinth;" and to the French word "*hyacinthin*" is given the signification, "*qui à la couleur de l'hyacinthe*," in BESCHERELLE'S *Dictionnaire National*, &c.

² "καὶ δὲ κάρητος,

ὀφίας ἦκε κόμας, δακνύθηναι ἀνθεὶ δρύϊας."

See also L. xxiii. l. 157; *Odys.* l. vi., v. 230.

³ KRATES has devoted a Sonnet to disprove the dictum of an earlier poet, that—

"Dark eyes are dearer far,
Than those that made the hyacinthine bell."

⁴ COLLINS, in his *Ode to Liberty*, adopting this sense, speaks of

"The youth whose locks divinely spreading
Like vernal hyacinths in sullen hue." &c. &c.

the intense blue of the sea, to describe the darkness of the eye-brows and hair,⁵ so it is contended that an epithet drawn from the deepest shade of the hyacinth might be applied to them with equal propriety. I cannot, however, discover a passage in any of the writers, either Greek or Roman, whose works I have been able to consult, in which the words *ὑακινθίνος*, or *hyacinthinus*, can be taken to mean absolutely either dark or black; but rather purple, so deep as to approach black. Still, the conjecture derives some countenance, from the fact that Theocritus has called both the hyacinth and the violet *black*:—

“Καὶ τὸ ὄν μέλαν ἐστὶ καὶ ἡ γραπτὰ ὑάκινθος.”⁶

—L. i., *Idyl.* x., v. 28.

But Virgil, in re-producing this line of Theocritus, whilst adhering to its tenor so far as regards the violet, has cautiously substituted the “*vaccinium*” (perhaps our *gladiolus*) instead of the hyacinth;⁷ and Manilius removes all doubt as to the latter, by describing—

“*Pallentes violas et purpureos hyacinthos.*”

—*Astronom.*, v. 257.

Besides, it is not possible to exclude from consideration the fact that from similarity, if not identity of colour, the name of the plant has been transferred to the gem; and the word “hyacinth” is applied indifferently to the carbuncle, the amethyst, and the flower.

Blue, therefore, purple, red, or white, being the understood tints of the hyacinth, it is still more hopeless to find any classical author who has used the word “hyacinthine” to describe the colour of hair.⁸ But this negative search in one direction, turns attention to another, which serves unequivocally to establish the propriety and expressiveness of Milton’s

⁵ κύαν-όφρυς; κύανο-χαίτης,
κύανο-πλόκαμος, &c.

⁶ “The lettered hyacinth of darksome hue,
And the sweet violet a sable blue.”

—*Fawkes*, transl.

Query. Does Theocritus in this line mean that the *flower* of the hyacinth is black? or does he not allude only to the letters (ἡ γραπτὰ) supposed to be inscribed on it?

⁷ “*Quid tum si fuscus Amyntas;
Et nigrae violae sunt; et vaccinia nigra.*”

—*Ecl.* x. 39.

Virgil, in another place, alludes to the purple hue of the black violet, “*Viola purpurea nigrae.*”—*Geor.*, L. iv., v. 275.

⁸ The *Septuagint* uses the word *ὑακινθινόν*, applied to linen, distinct from *πορφύρεον* and *κόκκινον*, and our Bible translates these terms respectively “blue,” “purple,” and “scarlet” (*Exod.* v. 5); but in the following verse, which speaks of skins dyed a hyacinth colour, “*δέρματα ὑακινθίνα*,” these words, I do not know why, are rendered “badger skins,” in our version. XENOPHON describes the helmet of Abardates, with its horse-hair crest, which Panthæa had dyed “purple,” *ὑακινθινο-βαφῆ*. —*Cyrop.*, L. vi., c. iv., s. 2.

expression. Before proceeding further, however, it may be well to revert to the mythical history of the hyacinth itself, as presented by the poets. HYACINTHUS, we are told, was a Spartan youth of royal birth and of extraordinary beauty, who was accidentally killed by the blow of a *discus*, when engaged in that game. To perpetuate the universal affliction for his untimely death, it was fabled that the leaves of the hyacinth became inscribed with the Greek interjection, *AI*, expressive of affliction; or with the Greek letters *YA*, the initials of the name of Hyacinthus. Another story is, that on the occasion of the suicide of Ajax, his blood was transformed into the same flower, which ever after bore on its petals the letters *AI*, the initials of his name as well as of that of Hyacinthus.⁹ The flower thus consecrated to their memory was ever after regarded by the Greeks as emblematic of death. But we search in vain amongst the flowers of the hyacinth for the letters thus assumed to be miraculously inscribed. The petals are too small to present space for their insertion, and although Pliny says that the characters are formed by raised lines and veins upon the surface,¹⁰ even those most eager to believe would have difficulty in discovering amongst their complicated corrugations any characters representing the initials of Ajax, or the lament for Hyacinthus.

To escape from this dilemma, it has been conjectured that under the single term of "hyacinth" the ancients must have included likewise both the *iris* and the *lily*; and this is supposed to account for the fact that colours have been ascribed to the poetical flower more diversified, and far more gorgeous, than are to be found in the hyacinth itself. OVID calls it more brilliant than Tyrian crimson, "*Tyrio nitentior ostra*;"¹¹ and VIRGIL calls it at one time "*suave rubens*," *sweetly red*!¹² and at another "*ferrugineus*," or the shade of rusted iron.¹³ Most of these descriptions would apply to the lily of Asia Minor, the *Lilium Chalcedonicum*, which Our Saviour has rendered memorable by His allusion to it in the Sermon on the Mount. Another showy species is the "*Martagon*," or "*Turk's-cap lily*," which has acquired its significant and descriptive name from the whorled elliptic leaves that curl backward, so as to give it the form of a turban. The upper surface of the petals, in more than one of the lilies here alluded to, is diversified by dark-brown marks, amongst which an ingenious explorer might persuade himself that he could discover the semblance of the Greek initials of Hyacinthus or of Ajax.¹⁴

Botanists have been divided as to the particular plant which per-

⁹ OVID, *Metam.*, l. xiii., v. 395; MOSCHUS, *Idyl.* iii. 6.

¹⁰ "By reason that the flower hath certain veines to be seen running in and out, resembling these two letters in Greek, A I, plaine and easie to be read."—PLINY, B. xxi., c. 11, translated by PHILEMON, Holland.

¹¹ OVID, *Metam.* x. 211.

¹² *Ecl.* iii. 63.

¹³ *Georg.* iv. 183.

¹⁴ "Littera communis mediis pueroque viroque,
Inscripta est foliis: hæc nominis, illa querelæ."

—OVID, *Metam.* xiii. 395.

petuates this myth;¹⁵ but whatever the minor differences by which opinions may be divided, there is one point which must be accepted in common by them all—that the petals of the particular flower, to whatever genus it may belong, must be bent and crisped backwards like those of the Turk's-cap lily. This speciality is distinctly established by the words of OVID in describing the metamorphose :—

"Flos oritur, formam que capit quam lilia; si non
Purpureus color huic, argenteus illis."

—*Metam.* x. 252.

And this peculiarity once established, it is obvious that Milton, in calling the locks of Adam hyacinthine, referred *not* to their length or to their colour, but to their form and the rich profusion of their curls.

With his wonted admiration for classical models, Milton fortified himself with high authority in adopting the word "hyacinthine." Homer has used it in two instances, one (already quoted) in describing the bath of Ulysses after his shipwreck, and another on the occasion of his return to his own home after his long absence.¹⁶ In both he is represented shaking loose the crisp curls of his hair, which clustered round his head like the flowers of the hyacinth :

"δακρυθινῶν ἀνθεῖ δμολας."

In translating both the one passage and the other, Pope has perverted the sense ; in the one case he supposes Homer to allude to the *length* of Ulysses' hair :—

"Back from his brows a length of hair unfurls,
His hyacinthine locks descend in wavy curls ;"

and in the other (the couplet before quoted) he makes it appear that Homer speaks of its *colour*—

"His thick large locks of hyacinthine dye."

Pope, however, was not the first translator of the *Odyssey* who fell into this mistake. So little credit has he acquired for a knowledge of Greek, that in his great task he is suspected to have made free use of the previous metrical version of Chapman. Chapman, however, in both the passages of the original that mention the hyacinth, proves to have read them aright, although his rendering of either is not very poetic :—

"His locks cleansed, curled the more and match'd in power,
To please an eye, the hyacinthine flower."

—*Odys.*, Book vi.

"Curls soft and bright

Adorned his head withal, and made it show
As if the flowering hyacinth did grow
In all its pride there." &c.

—*Ib.*, Book xxiii.

¹⁵ LINNEUS thought it was the larkspur, *Delphinium Ajacis*; SPRENGEL, the *gladiolus*; and MARTYN, the Martagon lily.

¹⁶ *Odyssey*, L. vi. 230; L. xxiii. 157.

But Chapman had a successor, Hobbes, "the philosopher of Malmesbury," who at the ripe age of eighty-two undertook to translate both the *Odyssey* and *Iliad*, and he (if any one) appears to have been the authority by whom Pope was led astray. Hobbes assumes the meaning of Homer to have been that in the process of bathing the locks of Ulysses were miraculously restored from grey to black :—

"Then Pallas to him came, and made him look

Taller and broader than he was before;

And from his hair the colour gray she took,

And made it like the hyacinthine flower."

—HOBBS, *Od.*, Book vi.

"Taller and greater Pallas made him had,

And varnished with black his curled head."

—*Ib.*, Book xxiii.

Another translator of Homer, Madame Dacier, would have been a safer guide for Pope, but her authority too was neglected by him, although its accuracy is unimpeachable.¹⁷ The error of Hobbes was adopted by Pope; and although Cowper, at a subsequent period, restored the real meaning,¹⁸ it is to be regretted that the most recent translators of the *Odyssey* have again reproduced it. The Dean of Canterbury, in his *hendeca-syllabic* version, describes the hair of Ulysses as—

"Smooth tresses,

. . . like hyacinthine bloom in colour."

—ALFORD'S *Odys.*, vi. 230.

And Mr. Worsley, by a doubly infelicitous rendering, has missed the meaning of Homer, both as to colour and form :—

"Hued like the hyacinth, his locks dispread,

Streaming in loose array from his thrice-glorious head."¹⁹

As neither of these gentlemen has as yet got beyond the Twelfth Book in his translation, it is to be hoped that before reaching the parallel passage in the Twenty-third Book, there will be opportunity for reconsidering the subject.

Turning backwards somewhat nearer to classical times, the meaning of Homer appears to have been thoroughly discerned by some at least of his

¹⁷ "La sage Minerve . . . donne de nouvelles grâces à ses cheveux bouclés qui descendent de sa tête semblables à la fleur d'hyacinthe."—MAD. DACIER, *Ody.*, Liv. vi.

"Minerve . . . lui rend ses grands et beaux cheveux qui retombent en grosses boucles sur ses épaules."—*Ibid.*, Liv. xxiii.

¹⁸ "From his head diffused

His curling locks, like hyacinthine flowers."

—COWPER, *Odys.*, Book vi.

"Poured his curls,

Like hyacinthine flowers, down from his head."

—*Ib.*, Book xxiii.

¹⁹ *The Odyssey of Homer, &c.* : by PHILIP STANHOPE WORSLEY, M.A.

successors.²⁰ DYONISIUS PERIEGETES, who has written a metrical summary of Geography, in verse which is the nearest thing to prose, when describing the persons of the natives of India, says with perfect accuracy that their hair, though singularly soft, is gathered round their heads like the bells of a hyacinth—

“σειδομένας δ' ἁκινθας,
Ποδάρας φορέουσιν ἐπὶ κρᾶτεςφιν εθειφας.”

—*Periegesis*, v. 1112.

RUFUS FESTUS AVIENUS, a later and less erudite geographer, who produced a feeble imitation of the *Periegesis*, has avoided the mistake about colour; he, in speaking of the people of India, says they arranged their long hair (*coma*) upon their heads, where its curls (*crine*) resembled the dark flowers of the hyacinth—

“Efflua semper,
His coma liventes imitatur crine hyacinthos.”

—AVIENUS, *Descrip. Orb. Terr.*, v. 1312.

Assuming, then, that the description of the hair of Ulysses in the *Odyssey* furnished the model from which Milton drew his picture of the curling locks of Adam in his *Paradise Lost*, enough has been cited above to show, that in adopting the term hyacinthine he applied it with consummate taste and propriety, and with a clear perception of its import. Whilst the tresses of Eve are described by him as falling in *ringlets* below her waist, the firm locks of Adam, crisped and *curling* like the bells of the hyacinth, cluster closely round his forehead; but though parted on either side, they reach no lower than his shoulders.

²⁰ *Eustathius*, the most erudite of the mediæval commentators on Homer, writing in the twelfth century, about A.D. 1160, was dubious as to the precise import of *ἁκινθινος*; and says it means *black*, or perhaps not black, but *pliant*.

THE HERDSMAN OF LA CAMARGUE.*

PART I.

AT the mouth of the Rhone, mapped out by the sinuosities of the river, there extends a region famous throughout the South for the peculiar wildness of its character—it is La Camargue. Before conducting our readers thither, and making them acquainted with the inhabitants by means of an episode drawn from life, we may be allowed to say a few words respecting the theatre on which took place the simple story we are about to relate. Here, as in certain new countries, nature and man are united by ties, the force of which we can but ill comprehend, unless the description of surrounding objects be given to illustrate the tale.

This country has not always been abandoned to the sort of savage condition the spectacle of which in the midst of civilization astonishes us. Stately and busy cities once flourished there. Saintes Maries and Aigues-Mortes long enjoyed the prosperity of sea-ports, properly so called. Soon, however, the inundations and deposits of the Rhone changed the conditions of the country, and ruined at once its commerce, its agriculture, and its industry. Approaching the termination of a course not less strange and irregular than that of the Nile, the great river comes from the Alps, bringing *débris* of diverse origin, which, before disappearing in the sea, it leaves on the lands of those who dwell by its shores. These *débris*, often brought from the mountains of Switzerland, have traversed the calm waters of the lake of Geneva, then the rapids of Dauphiny, and at last, along with decomposed remains of animals and vegetables, are heaped up by the Mediterranean. Thus by degrees the peculiar character of La Camargue is formed. This land presents singular contrasts. A thick layer of the mud which borders the delta of the Rhone gives the richest produce on that alluvial soil, so fertile that it often yields two harvests in the year. We see only fields of golden corn, green meadows, and trees with velvety fruits; but enter into the interior of the island of La Camargue, and the sternest scenery saddens our thought. Before us is an immense marsh, of which a deep pond, the pond of Valcares, is the centre. Here and there sandy *landes* or sombre pine-woods alone divide that greenish half-liquid plain. And yet there is a strange interest in that sombre landscape, which arises from the majesty of outline—of calm, spread everywhere—of that uninterrupted solitude which is one of the charms of the desert.

Everything in La Camargue manifests the powerful action of creative nature. The deposits from the sea and those from the rivers are unceasingly mingled and confounded together. During winter the ponds, increased by rains, inundate the plain and rejoin the sea; during summer, pools of stagnant water infect the country with deleterious miasma. Pebbles and stones are unknown on that grey and level tract.

* Translated by permission from the "*Revue des deux Mondes*."

The smallest flowers have a strange stamp, which distinguishes them from flowers of the same species elsewhere. The leaves of the daisy, the camomile, the aster, usually so delicate and fragile, become heavy and rank in the slimy and saline soil of La Camargue. In the slow progress of many centuries of Nature's march this strange country recalls the first arborescent shores which appeared on the hardly-cooled surface of our globe.

The contact of the sea gives to La Camargue another distinctive character. The Mediterranean washes its sandy coasts without ceasing, as if it would dispute empire with the Rhone, and bury the delta under its waves. Filtrating into the pine-woods, it decorates the resinous trunks of the conifers with pieces of sea-weed; caressing the reeds with its foamy waves, it scatters over them snowy flakes. In evaporating on the sand, it leaves there fantastic delineations of saline efflorescences; like a dew to the marshy prairies, it embellishes them with crystalline pearls. Its passage is everywhere betrayed—here by pernicious miasm, there by sharp odours, further on by saline deposits, and again by dried sea-weed. On the summits of the pine-trees the sea hangs silvery ribands of its marine moss; on the high banks of the roads it scatters like a carpet of snow the white foam, and, like large sheets, basins of briny water extend further and further upon the soil, which is intersected in all directions by dikes and gutters. La Camargue, in a word, is the Kingdom of Salt—the air, the water, the plants, the soil, the canals which distribute the waters of the Rhone, are all impregnated with it.

The principal crops of the aqueous or reedy Savannahs—as these marshy prairies are called—are rushes and reeds. These plants are excellent food for cattle, and also are made use of to form the thatched roofs and partitions of the cottages, to make chairs, and immense straw mats to guard the heaps of salt from the rain, and to preserve the newly-sown lands from saline efflorescences. The salt season brings movement and life every summer into these waste *landes*, whence France is furnished with her best salt.

The population is in keeping with the country. The battle of life has to be fought in two different modes—either by active effort or patient endurance. Savage animals have to be conquered; and in order to obtain salt, man must brave the emanations from a deleterious soil. Mosquitoes thirsting for blood; clouds of yellowish locusts; marsh birds silent as ghosts; venomous reptiles rolling in the mud; unceasingly remind the dweller of La Camargue of the conditions of Nature which weigh upon him, and which it is his pride to oppose with invincible courage. Here graze savage bulls buried breast-deep in rushes of the reed-ground; there gallop wild horses with flying manes over the salt-hardened land. It is a curious circumstance that the bulls of La Camargue are black as ebony, whilst the horses, on the contrary, are pure white.

In the midst of the bulls the keeper reigns—the herdsman, who is

charged with watching over them. He accomplishes this task with the assistance of one of the most peaceable of the oxen, the *dondaire*, or bell-ox, who carries a large bell on his wooden collar. By what mysterious means this peaceable ox imposes his will on his turbulent companions, who are never disobedient to his bell, is one of the thousand secrets of nature which we observe, but cannot explain. As to the keeper, his sole weapon is an iron trident. Mounted every day on his white steed, sleeping by night in the open air with a handkerchief wrapped round his large felt-hat, clothed in a fur blouse, sunburnt and bare-legged, the athletic herdsman resembles the wild horseman of the American Pampas. These indomitable men love their independent and rude life. One sees them sometimes rush boldly through the marshes on their shuddering steeds, sometimes pass like lightning by the skirts of a pine-wood, escorted by a black troop which follow, bellowing. They are known and feared as much as the ferocious animals whose keeping is entrusted to them. At their loud shouts tumultuous troops of horses and bounding bulls may be seen hurrying from all points of the island. The herdsman is the true King of La Camargue.

The life of the salt-gatherer is very different. During the winter he is shut up in a poor hut near the deserted salt-pans; whilst in the summer he becomes the head of an army of labourers. In contrast to the herds-men, the salters, obliged to keep near their salt-pits, know no other joys than those of the family and the hearth. A band of children, rickety and pallid from fever, play in the sun before the door of their dwelling. The sight of these miserable families is extremely touching and sad. Privations of all sorts—the monotony of their existence, the maladies caused by the vicinity of the marshes—would make these poor people the most to be pitied in the world, if there were not near them creatures yet more unhappy—the Revenue Collectors, who are condemned to vegetate on that arid plain, without ever knowing the sweetnesses of domestic life.

Such is the general aspect—such the population of La Camargue.

Will our readers now follow us into the wildest part of this region, to an island formed at the south of La Camargue by two arms of the Rhone—the Rhone-Mort, with heavy and yellowish waters, and the Petit-Rhone, with turbulent and rapid waves? No outline of any hamlet appears on this part of La Camargue; a dark pine-forest descends down to the very edge of the sea—the solitude of the marshes is only disturbed by the heavy flights of aquatic birds. There a shifting soil and putrid miasm do not permit, without peril, the harvesting of the aquatic plants, which bend under the blast of the roaring *marin*.* Thus in the adjoining country, this uncultivated, unhealthy and deserted island, is designated by the characteristic name of the Sauvage. In the midst of the Sauvage is found a truly desolate *lande*: large salt-works extend their white marks

* A species of sirocco.

in regular fashion; a salt-maker's poor hut is built on the borders, and through a clump of rickety pines a little Custom-house station is visible on the neighbouring Down. This place is called Sansouire.*

The remembrance of a rare occurrence in the monotonous life of the populations of La Camargue—the love of a salter's daughter for a herdsman—brings this humble dwelling to our notice.

In the early part of the winter of 1840, when an icy north wind caused the dry branches of the pines in the pine-forests to crackle, and the reeds in the marshes to quiver, a family of salt-makers came to settle at Sansouire, which had been abandoned on account of its insalubrity and scanty profits. The new salt-makers were poor people, who had been employed on the rice-fields on the shores of the Rhone. An unexpected inundation had suddenly swept away, not only the harvest of the proprietor, but the abode and the means of livelihood of the workmen. After despairingly inquiring what was to become of them without shelter, means, or work, they had accepted as an unhopèd-for happiness employment at the salt-pits of Sansouire. A young couple and the mother of the husband comprised the whole family.

Tall and lean, the salter, named Berzile, was of that leaden colour which tells of the influence of bad air. He was already bent by toil, and his hands, although strong and hard, trembled like those of an old man. His old mother herself was reduced by fever to such a state of emaciation that she was always called *Fennète* (the small woman). As to the young wife, she had received the name of Caroubie, doubtless on account of her decided liking for the indigenous fruit of the carob-tree, and also because of her slender figure and the reddish colour of her hair, which resembled the exact tint of the pods of that tree. Having made the journey painfully on foot, laden with clothes and indispensable tools, often straying into the middle of marshes, the poor family reached Sansouire, worn out and shivering. How delighted and surprised were they to find the house open and cheerful-looking, with a good fire of *bouse*,† and some flaming pine branches at the top. A simple repast was set out on the table, and a pitcher of water, precious possession on these sea marshes, invited the weary travellers to quench their thirst, whilst a tame sea-mew, hopping round the family, seemed to welcome them to their home.

As the salt-gatherers were hesitating to seat themselves at the hospitable board, the door opened gently, and a thin pale young man appeared on the threshold. He was one of the Revenue Collectors from the neighbouring station. Enfeebled, and almost worn out by his monotonous existence, the young Collector had learnt that new salt-gatherers were about to set up at Sansouire. Those who have long lived with one or two feverish

* By *Sansouire* is also understood the saline efflorescences which form whitish spots on the soil. They abound in the marshy grounds of La Camargue.

† *Bouse* (cattle-dung) is made use of, instead of peat, in these poor *landes*, which are deficient in wood.

and silent comrades can alone understand the happiness this poor Custom-house official felt at this moment. He welcomed beforehand as friends the unknown tenants of Sansouire. Was he not about to meet a family, to hear a woman's voice, to have companions in privation, to cheer? But might not the comfortless dwelling at the salt-works repulse the strangers? There was something so lugubrious in its aspect as might well prevent the new-comers from installing themselves there; and therefore, in order to give as cheerful an air as possible to the dwelling at Sansouire, Alabert (that was the name of the revenue collector) had himself cleaned and brightened up the little house, so as to change the poor dilapidated place into a smiling cottage.

The first few weeks which the family of the salt-gatherer passed at Sansouire was a peculiarly hard-working time, but the new-comers did not complain of that—regular work seemed happiness to them.

The summer came; and one fine morning Caroubie gave birth to a little girl. Alabert was her godfather, and he gave her the name of Manidette. The salt-gatherers never had another child. Manidette was therefore very much cherished by the poor family, of whom she was the joy and the pride. Many times they feared to lose her; and as affection is often developed in proportion to the anxiety which is felt for the beloved being, the fragile health of Manidette only increased their tenderness for her.

At six years of age she was very ill. She lay on Caroubie's knees. It seemed to her as if death could never take her from her mother's arms, and she clasped the child convulsively to her breast. Fennète, pale and wrinkled, leaned over the poor little creature, as if to breathe into her the small life which was left to herself. The good grandmother besought Heaven to take her instead of the well-beloved child. Berzile, seated by the hearth, beheld with anguish his mother, who sought death, and whom death refused—his child, who wished to live, about to die. It was a dull and rainy winter's day; a melancholy fire of bouse was nearly extinguished by the showers, which fell in torrents. The weather-cock creaked on the roof; the horses neighed in the pine-wood, shaking their wet manes; the bulls bellowed, stamping the *lande*. At this moment the door of the hut opened, and Alabert entered softly. His clothes were soaked, and he held in his hand a shell, called, in the country, on account of its form, the Madonna's Ear.

"The sea was very stormy this morning," said he, in a low voice, to Caroubie, careful not to disturb the slumber into which the child had sunk; "I went to the shore to see if a Madonna's Ear could be found, to bring relief to your Manidette." And Alabert gave the pretty shell to the young woman.

"Ah! thanks," replied she, placing it quickly over the mouth of the child. "Tell the Virgin that thou sufferest, and pray heartily to her," murmured she, bending over Manidette; "she will listen, if thou speakest in her ear."

The child repeated the words uttered by its mother with a feeble voice and the touch of the fresh and polished shell was somewhat grateful and cooling to its burning lips. Caroubie removed the shell from the mouth to the ear of the child. Everybody knows the kind of indistinct murmur which proceeds from a shell when it is applied to the ear. The fever of the poor child was soothed by the tones; and, cradled as it were by the mysterious sounds she heard, Manidette slept sweetly. Her mother held the shell constantly over her warm and velvety little ear. On tiptoe Berzile, Alabert, and Fennète cautiously drew near, trying to read the answer of the Virgin on the countenance of the young invalid. The sleep of the child was prolonged, her nerves gradually calmed down, her heavy head was relieved; and on awakening, she smiled, and began to play with her beautiful rosy shell. The prayers of the poor family had been heard; the child was out of danger, and every one kneeled to thank the Madonna.

The salt-works, which had prospered rapidly under the management of Berzile, occupied the husband and wife so constantly that they could never leave Sansouire. Enfeebled by her great age, Fennète walked with difficulty, and scarcely ever left the room on the lower storey, for her trembling hand still guided the domestic arrangements. It was Alabert, therefore, who took Manidette to the sea-beach to seek shells, or to the pine-woods to gather broom, or to the heath to collect round and polished pebbles. He taught her to read, to write, to cast accounts; in short, all the learning he had himself. When she was twelve years old he took her to Saintes Maries to learn the Catechism.

Under the shield of this pure and ardent affection Manidette gently grew up. In the country, the love of a man of five-and-thirty or forty for a young girl of fifteen, would appear an absurdity. "He might be her father," would be an unanswerable argument. The salters continued to leave their daughter to Alabert's care with perfect confidence. The Collector had at first watched, with simply a paternal interest, the development of Manidette, who, from a joyous and careless child, had by degrees grown into a modest and thoughtful maiden. He had hoped to love her as a sister. There came a day in which this illusion could no longer be cherished, and he sighed deeply to think what should be the end of his love. Manidette regarded him as a second father;—to ask her in marriage was to bring ridicule upon himself. How changed since the pleasant times when, carrying the little girl in his arms, he had taken her to play in the sun on the shining sands. The bull-chase had for a long time replaced these walks and playful games. The bull-chases are great events in the peaceful life of La Camargue, and lead to nearly all the marriages in the country; for it is there the young people meet, and make choice of their future lovers. Manidette was in her sixteenth year; it was time to think of a husband for her; and as the care of the salt-pits prevented the salters from taking their daughter to these festivals, they were delighted

that Alabert could accompany her thither. Manidette confided her cares and troubles to Alabert; but it was no longer a question of a bouquet to gather, or a rush-basket to fill with shells—it was the fear of not appearing beautiful enough; and Alabert felt clearly that this coquetry was not for him.

Manidette's was not that style of beauty which pleases peasant fancy. The charm of her face consisted in the perfect harmony of its lines, and the extreme gentleness of her expression. She was too delicate to be employed at the salt-works, therefore her hands had remained soft and fine; and as she read with pleasure the small number of volumes which Alabert had procured for her; embroidered her own apparel; spoke little, and in a low voice; stepped noiselessly in walking; and, as at the salt festival at the conclusion of the season, took no part in the songs or dances of the work-people, she was called by no other name than that of *Doumaiselette* (the little lady).

The Revenue Collectors usually only remain a few years at the same station, and there had been more than one opportunity for Alabert to leave Sansouire; but, since the birth of Manidette, he had become attached to that poor soil, and, each time, he had requested as a favour to remain there. Although astonished at this singular constancy, his superiors had not cared to dissuade him. Alabert said, that if removed from Manidette he could not taste any happiness; and in order to remain near her he hesitated not to sacrifice his advancement.

PART II.

It was about the end of Spring. The Summer promised to be a fine season. Berzile had already enlarged his salt-works. It was Sunday; there was to be a *muselade** (muzzling) in the enclosure of the Radeau; and on their road thither Alabert and Manidette walked over the silvery sand, in which, as in a soft carpet, their footsteps sank. The crucifixes sparkled on the narrow roads which cross the salt-marshes; beautiful bunches of sea-fennel sprang up from the ground; a resinous perfume arose from the pine-woods. The wild ducks called in the marshes, the sea-birds on the shore, and the ravens from the tall firs. The rosy morning had coloured the cheeks of Manidette, and a certain languid softness in her eyes showed that she was not insensible to the splendour of re-awakened Nature. The Collector contemplated her with tenderness. "I should be happy and content to love her without return, if she would not give her heart to another," said he. And as he knew the most secret thoughts of Mani-

* An operation which consists in fastening the muzzles of the calves, when they have reached a certain age, in a sort of wooden nippers, which, whilst preventing them from sucking, allows them to graze in the marshes. It is a novel sort of weaning.

dette, as well as every line of her beauty, a ray of hope shone in his eyes, for it seemed to him that her tranquil soul could never know the torments of love.

The young maiden and the Collector had reached the pine-wood which separates the Radeau from the *lande* of the Sauvage. The sun rose high in the sky, and the shadows of the pines fell on the arid ground. They were already far from Sansouire. At the sight of the heath which carpeted the sand of the forest with white and pink blossoms, Manidette, with childish joy, began to run here and there to admire and gather the wild flowers. Glad of escaping one of these festivals, at which he always trembled lest Manidette should find a lover, Alabert followed the young girl, without reminding her that the hour of the muzzling drew near. Suddenly, at the moment when, rosy with pleasure, Manidette raised herself up with her apron full of flowers, a furious bull appeared through the trees. Advancing with wild bounds, panting sides, blood-shot eyes, lashing tail, and nostrils covered with foam, he made straight towards the young girl. A mortal paleness spread over her face when she perceived him. There was no means of escape—not even flight. The high furze which twined together at her feet imprisoned her as in a narrow labyrinth. With her back against the trunk of a tree, motionless, and frozen with fear, she awaited the bull, who advanced, bellowing. Alabert did not see the furious animal until he was almost close upon Manidette. A great barrier of pines and thorny bushes separated him from the animal. With a desperate effort, in order to divert to himself the anger of the bull, he shouted loudly, and waved his handkerchief convulsively; but nothing would turn the bull, who, after having looked savagely at the Collector, rushed with lowered head towards the unfortunate maiden. At this moment a Keeper, mounted upon his steed, arrived like lightning. He thrust at the animal vigorously with his iron trident. Pain made the bull wheel about and rush immediately upon the herdsman—but he, on his guard, received him on his trident. The weapon entered deeply into the nostrils of the animal, who fled, full of rage, leaving behind him a red track.

Motionless and benumbed, Manidette had remained leaning against the large pine. Leaping lightly from his steed, the keeper lifted her up like a feather, took her *en croupe*, and set off with her.

"Where are we going?" said Manidette, trembling.

"To the muzzling, to which you were doubtless bound," answered the horseman, in a strong voice. "The muzzling was just beginning when I heard the shout of the Collector, and I galloped my horse in your direction, rightly thinking that a raised bull had escaped into the pine-wood."

Manidette and the Keeper had hardly exchanged these few words when they reached the Radeau. This place, chosen for the muzzling, forms an immense sandy circus between the pine-wood of the Sauvage and the sea. Wet by the waves which, agitated by the mistral, rolled on the land, a herd of catt'e watched by the Keeper, and kept together by the bell-leaders,

crowded together on the shore. The young bulls, the heroes of the day, might be seen in the midst; they seemed to comprehend the danger which threatened them, and, terrified, pressed close to their mothers. Some of them, already big and strong, with fierce eye fronted the multitude scattered on the borders of the forest. The people had assembled from all the districts of La Camargue, in order to be present at this singular weaning, and from the preceding evening whole families had camped on the plain. Covered with canvas over hoops, the waggons, placed in line, formed a barrier, behind which refuge could be taken in case of need. After having gently set Manidette down on the ground, and recommended her to the care of the curious, who gathered around the yet trembling girl, the bold Keeper darted towards the black troop, which, shuddering, awaited the operation of the muzzling. With a red handkerchief round his head, as if to brave the fierce horde he governed, his body free in a white loose blouse, his legs girt with leathern gaiters, firmly seated on his saddle, trident in hand—whether motionless he kept the bulls in their ranks with a look, or that rapid as lightning he pursued to a distance a furious young beast—the manly profile of Bamboche (that was the name of the young keeper) was vigorously defined on the *lande* or the sky.

Manidette had eyes only for the intrepid horseman; she did not observe Alabert in the background, who, with torn clothes, bruised hands, and face scratched by the briers, regarded her sadly.

The muzzling began; the calves touched lightly by the trident of a mounted keeper were separated from the herd, whilst other keepers, standing in the midst of the circle, received them, throwing them down on the sand, and, seizing their budding horns, fastened the muzzle on their nostrils. As soon as the operation was finished, the animal shook his strangely-imprisoned muzzle, then fled into the pine wood, where his mother, bellowing, rejoined him. The females, with haggard eyes, sheltered the last calves against their panting flanks, and each time a keeper approached to touch a fresh one, their long lowings resounded in the air. Some even followed their young into the midst of the Radeau, licked them tenderly, and looked menacingly on the keepers who surrounded them.

Disdaining the first act of the muzzling, which only is for the youngest calves, Bamboche drank and jested with a handsome and lively wine-girl, who circulated the glass freely round her little cart. "Now it is my turn," said the young Keeper, when he saw that there were none left to muzzle except fine heifers, and strong, stout young bulls. Full of distrust, and having reached the most dangerous age, these young bulls menaced all those who came near with their firm-pointed horns. It was to Bamboche that the honour of muzzling these belonged.

The peasants of La Camargue are so fond of the bulls that they never fail, whatever happens, to take their part. If a keeper is wounded, it is his own stupidity, "just what he deserves," they say—and they joke instead

of pitying him; but if to save his life he seriously wounds the animal who menaces him, there is general indignation: "Poor beast; what barbarity!" they cry. With Bamboche no accident of that sort was to be feared. Skilful, supple, endowed with Herculean strength, he threw the bull so rapidly on its side, that nobody had time to tremble for either of the two adversaries. With him, they were sure the two difficult operations of muzzling and branding would always terminate in a satisfactory manner; and that in the bull-chases, after making the crowd pass through a variety of emotions, he would leave them equally delighted with his own skill and with the courage of the denizens of the marsh.

The sense of security is the greatest pleasure that the hero of a dangerous scene can afford the spectators. So each of Bamboche's successful operations was received with vehement applause. When the last bull was secured, and Bamboche on horseback rode round to receive the congratulations of the spectators, all the young girls ranged themselves on his way, and clapped their hands. All spoke at once, and vied with each other for a word or a look from the handsome Keeper. Manidette, although the only silent one, was not the least enthusiastic. Bamboche received the ovation with calmness and dignity. Habituated to easy conquests, he received these feminine flatteries with a careless mien. To the handsome Paradette alone he showed a little attention. Pleased with this preference, she offered a glass of Alicant wine to the keeper, who emptied it at a draught. "To our better acquaintance!" said he; and followed by his bell-leader, he set off like an arrow.

The muzzling being ended, every one prepared to return home. The mules were harnessed, the asses yoked to the carts; and all set off on their way.

It was a singular sight to see these caravans moving in all directions through the midst of the *landes* and the pine-woods, where there was no track—the experienced eyes of the peasants noting slight marks amongst the rushes and furze in order to guide themselves.

Alabert had rejoined Manidette. They walked quickly towards Sansouire. The Collector was sad and pensive, and the young girl often turned her head, as if to discover somebody in the marshes.

In going from the theatre of the muzzling on the borders of the marsh-ground of Sansouire, stands the Mazet, a poor hut consisting of two divisions—a sort of shed which serves as a stable, and a kitchen furnished with an enormous fire-place for roasting a whole ox. There the proprietors of the stock give the traditional dinner to the keepers on the muzzling and branding days. The way to Sansouire lay by the Mazet. Alabert and Manidette reached it by night-fall. Paradette's small vehicle was standing unyoked before the entrance. It could not be said that the guests had risen from table, for they had never been seated, chairs being an unknown luxury in these huts; but they had finished the last morsel of bread, and drank the last drop of brandy. The cheeks of the keepers

were purple, and their eyes sparkling. Separate from his grosser companions, Bamboche, by the side of Paradette, leaned with his elbow on the lower window-sill which opened on the *lande*. Manidette divined that their talk was of love, and she suddenly turned pale. Alabert proposed that she should enter the Mazet and take a little rest.

At that moment Paradette cried: "Here is the salt-maker with the green shawl. She is such a delicate morsel, that she will disappear under that handkerchief like a mosquito under a leaf."

Bamboche interrupted her. "Thou knowest well," said he, "that I do not like honest girls to be jeered. One whom I have saved this morning must not be teased before my eyes this evening."

Manidette thanked the Keeper with an expressive look, and went away sadly, leaning on the arm of Alabert. From that day Manidette continued pensive. Brought up in a serene atmosphere, not knowing any happiness excepting of a calm and orderly nature, she questioned herself what singular charm an impetuous and violent character like that of the Keeper could exercise over her. She tried to forget him, and looked on her love as a crime. She was too sensible not to appreciate all the obstacles which separated her from Bamboche: besides, she said to herself that such a pale slight little creature as she was could never please that rough son of the desert; and for the first time she regretted that Providence had not given her a fresh robust beauty like Paradette's.

However, one morning Manidette gaily retook her place at the casement; her needle no longer lingered in her fingers; a sweet smile played upon her lips. Berzile and Caroubie, who had thought that she was suffering from the effects of the fright caused by the attack of the bull on the day of the muzzling, returned thanks for her restoration, whilst Alabert, persuaded that reason had at length triumphed over a love the progress of which he had watched with a jealous solicitude, was beside himself with joy. Fennète alone shook her head. "The health of the soul is like that of the body; when the cure is as mysterious as the disease, it is a serious matter."

Fennète was not mistaken. Manidette, having at length learnt that love is kindled, glows, and is quenched in the heart, without the will ever having power to feed or moderate the flame, resigned herself to yield to the feeling with which the Keeper had inspired her heart: only, she would love without hope of marriage. She traced out courageously a life of abnegation, and in that resolution found, once more, calm for her mind and rest for her soul. Desirous of sanctifying her passion by one of those acts which, to pious souls, are indissoluble bonds, Manidette had resolved to vow fidelity to the Keeper on the altar of the *Saintes Maries*.

Tradition asserts, that, after the crucifixion of Our Lord, Mary Salome, Mary James, and Mary Magdalena set forth on board a poor barque, crossed the sea, and landed in Camargue, at the mouth of the Rhone.

Magdalena went into the desert of St. Beaume to weep for her sins ; the two other Maries, remaining in Camargue, preached Christianity there, and caused an oratory to be built on the shore of the sea, in which they were interred. A Christian prince, in order to shelter their ashes from profanation, caused a church to be built on the site of their little chapel, which he fortified and surrounded with thick ramparts. This church, the first built in Gaul, is that of the Saintes Maries. A shrine built on a chapel above the choir still encloses the bones of the two Maries. Every year, on the 25th of May, the people go in pilgrimage to adore these holy relics, which only on that day are laid upon the altar. It suffices to touch with faith the holy shrine to be healed of every disease, and that every prayer should be heard. Therefore we may understand how from all parts of La Camargue the fever-stricken and paralytic resort to Saintes Maries for health, and also that women and girls pray there for their children or their lovers. Recollecting that to obtain the favour of the Saints it is customary to make a votive offering to them, Manidette opened her wardrobe, took thence a pretty shell, and put it into a perfumed bag to place it on their altar. This shell was the most precious treasure of the poor girl—the Madonna's Ear which Alabert had formerly found by the sea-side, and which it had been believed had saved Manidette. The young girl awaited the 25th of May with impatience. The great day came at length. Manidette had not told her project to any one. Business had obliged Alabert to set out the preceding evening for Aigues-Mortes ; but the damsel was not sorry to accomplish alone and free the act which would give her heart for ever to the Keeper. She dressed herself in her best, and at break of day told her parents of her desire to go in pilgrimage to Saintes Maries.

Fennète approached Manidette, and said in a low voice, " I do not ask the name of him whom thou lovest ; but remember, when one makes a love-vow, it is for life. The journey is long : thou wilt reflect, my child."

Troubled at finding a part of her secret divined by her grandmother Manidette went away blushing, whilst the old woman, never supposing that her grand-daughter, so sensible and so reserved, could be fascinated by a keeper, smiled to think that ere long the salt-works would reckon an additional workman. " So sensible as she is, Manidette will have chosen some clever workman. Truly it seems to me that her pensiveness has coincided with the absence of Pierrot, our best hand, whom illness obliged to go to his own village. She is certainly going to Saintes Maries to pray for his recovery. So much the better ; he is a good fellow ; I know that he admires Manidette ; and, as there is not his equal for managing salt-pans, the works will rapidly prosper." Happy at this thought, Fennète took joyfully to her sweeping-broom, whilst Manidette, quite confused, turned the corner of the road from Sansouire.

LADIES' HEAD GEAR.

BY F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

So diversified and extensive is the subject indicated by the title of this article, that, although much has been done incidentally to describe it, so much remains to be done, that an illustrated volume would be no difficult matter to compile, restricted to this branch of costume. When we remember that M. Jean-Baptiste Thiers, Doctor in Theology and Curé of Champrond, did not disdain to compile a volume of four-hundred and forty-one pages on the History of Perukes, and that M. Nicolai, the learned biblioplist of Berlin and Member of the Prussian Academy of Science, gave the world another only a little less bulky, devoted to his "Historic Researches" on the subject of false hair as used in the most ancient as well as in modern times, the larger scope that head-dress in general offers need not here be insisted on.

It is not the intention of the present paper to aim at more than a brief narrative of a few of the fashionable follies which have decorated the heads of the fair, and must have made other heads ache in inventing them. Certainly the most imaginative fancy could scarcely realize, at once, many of the extraordinary inventions ladies have carried so proudly in the world. Intended to cover the seat of reason, very little reason seems to have actuated the invention or adoption of many of these conceits. But it does not become men to laugh too readily at the folly of ladies' head-gear, when they have made universal in Europe the modern black hat—a thing without one recommendation, painful to wear, and so frightfully ugly that we are inclined to pity the artists of futurity if they are to paint historic pictures of the present time truthfully. In no age or country do the monuments of painting or sculpture represent anything equally hideous worn by man.

The use of false hair seems to have first aroused the ire of the ancient satirists against the ladies; and the heaps of it they placed on their heads in the days of Hadrian and the later Roman era, abundantly sprinkled with gold-dust and otherwise adorned, much soured the temper and turned the ink to gall of that class who are "nothing if not satirical." Certainly, if the ladies were weak, the satirists were always strong; though argument was lost in virulent abuse of fashionable follies by the "unco' guid" of all ages, as we shall see in the course of our glance at a few of them.

We need not prosecute our researches further than the fourteenth century, to find enough amusement and abundant variety for the time and space at our command. The extreme freaks of fancy in head-gear may be said to have fairly commenced then—in the horns, worn with much pride and complacency by the fair ladies of France, and exported, as usual, from thence, for the decoration of the rest of the fashionable world. Whether the fashion may have originated in the crusading experiences of the age, and have been adopted from the Druse women of Lebanon (who have been

always remarkable for the use of a large horn upon the forehead as a support to their veils) does not appear; but the western world was astonished by finding its wives and daughters suddenly decorated with horned head-dresses quite as absurd. They excited the ire of the clergy, who adopted the most stringent means to discountenance the fashion. The Bishop of Paris, not satisfied with preaching a highly-inflammatory sermon against them, excited his hearers to cry out, "Beware the ram!" when they saw ladies wearing them. He even went so far as to promise ten days pardon to all who should thus cry out against them. The effect does not appear to have been conclusive, for we find them represented in the drawings attached to ancient manuscripts shooting forth larger than ever; and, like those of the Druse ladies, supporting a veil that depended from their summit, a yard above the head, to the heels of the fair wearers. The clergy became more generally irate, particularly when they saw their denunciations so little attended to; and one of the number took upon himself the task of a travelling crusade against them, which was so formidable as to have been considered worthy of record in the general chronicles of the time, compiled by Euguerand de Monstrelet, who tells us, that in the year 1428, a friar, called Thomas Conecte, a member of the Carmelites, made a tour in Flanders and Northern France, preaching against the vices and vanities of the day. His invectives, as usual, so far fascinated the people, that they erected scaffolds in the principal squares of the towns which he signified his intention to visit. The inhabitants came in great crowds to hear him. All that relates to the ladies is best told in Monstrelet's words:—

"He was so vehement against them, that no woman thus dressed dared to appear in his presence; for he was accustomed, when he saw any of them with such dresses, to excite the little boys to torment and plague them, giving them certain days of pardon for so doing, and which he said he had the power of granting. He ordered the boys to shout after them, even when the ladies had departed from him; and the boys pursuing them, endeavoured to pull down their monstrous head-dresses, so that the ladies were forced to seek shelter in places of safety. Their cries caused many tumults between them and the servants of the ladies.

"Friar Thomas, nevertheless, continued his abuse and invectives so loudly, that no women with high head-dresses any longer attended his sermons, but dressed in caps somewhat like those worn by peasants and people of low degree. The ladies of rank, on their return from these sermons, were so much ashamed by the abusive expressions of the preacher, that the greater part laid aside their head-dresses and wore such as those of nuns. But this reform lasted not long; for, like as snails when any one passes by them draw in their horns, and when all danger seems over dart them forth again, so these ladies, shortly after the preacher had quitted their country, forgetful of his doctrine and abuse, began to assume their colossal head-dresses, and wear them even higher than before."



This grotesque and inconvenient fashion was destined to longer vitality than usual, and even to become the local characteristic of the upper-class peasantry in Normandy and Brittany. The leveling system of modern railway life may have had some effect in substituting new fashions recently in these places; but twenty years ago steeple head-dresses were commonly worn there, in structure precisely like those in mediæval drawings, as well as others of still more grotesque invention—veritable mountains of gauze, and lawn, and lace, making the ladies the bigger as well as the better half of mankind.



The next "great" variety of the fifteenth century was, the adoption of a vast wire-work support for the gauze wimple, or veil, which fell from thence at a wide distance from the back of the wearer. The hair was completely hidden by being drawn up from the forehead to the top of the head, into a sort of hat or case of coloured silks, enriched with embroidery in gold or silver threads and jewels. A lady's hair was thus hidden from sight during the larger part of this,

and the following century, by the fashionable head-dresses as they succeeded each other.

A perfectly geometrical form, which might have been invented by some clerical architect, succeeded to these in the reign of our Henry VII. An angle like the penthouse of an old timber mansion was formed over a lady's forehead, and a straight ugly line was brought down the sides of the face; the whole thing was formalism run mad. It is seen in full effect on the effigy of Henry's mother, the Countess Dowager of Richmond, upon her tomb in Westminster Abbey, and almost appears as if the lady had placed her head in one of its architectural enrichments rather than in a matron's cap. In head-dresses of almost equal ugliness appeared the ladies of the Court of that gallant wife-killer Henry VIII., but relieved occasionally by piles of lappets, which even Holbein's careful drawing hardly enables us to comprehend fully.



His regal daughter, Mary, was too much of an ascetic, and had too unhealthy a constitution, for the gaieties of life, and fashion with her was left as she found it; Her Majesty encased her head in the sort of velvet porringers which spoke more of comfort than variety. Not so did her sister behave; there never was a Lady Sovereign more fond of "queen-ing it" than Her Majesty Elizabeth. Her love of dress was not only extravagant, but reckless in its profusion. At her death she left clothes enough for a dozen Queens, and all be-laced and be-spangled, covered with jewels, or cut and slashed with gores and insertions of silks and

velvets—so be-loaded with decoration, that it was difficult to say of what the original stuff was composed which formed the substructure of the whole. The hair now burst forth again in full effulgence, for Her Majesty's was a bright red, and she wore it in full profusion. To let the locks

“ dangle

Loose as a bride's hair,

is a simile in Shakespeare, derived from the custom of allowing the disheveled hair of a girl to flow over her shoulders and down the back at all marriage ceremonies. Elizabeth was proud of the title “*Virgin Queen*,” and the American State of “*Virginia*” obtained its name in compliment to her idiosyncrasy. Hence, probably, the lavish display of Her Majesty's locks, and the ready subserviency of the Court ladies in imitating it. It was, however, an additional courtier-like faculty which induced them to use chemicals to change the colour of their hair, when dark, to the sandy hue of the Queen's. “*Golden locks*” were praised by poets, and remained in the ascendant long after the Queen's death; indeed, until Monarchy itself was temporarily extinguished by a reign of Puritanism. As Elizabeth grew old, her vanity became additionally sensitive, and she piled false locks in place of her own overflowing tresses, and was not ashamed to be styled the “*most beautiful, or rather, beauty, of queens*,” when she was nearly seventy years of age. Paul Hentzner, the German traveller, has left the most striking description of her appearance as he saw her at Greenwich Palace, in the sixty-fifth year of her age. “*Her face oblong, fair, but wrinkled; her eyes small, yet black and pleasant; her nose a little hooked, her lips narrow, and her teeth black (a defect the English seem subject to, from their too great use of sugar); she had in her ears two pearls with very rich drops; she wore false hair, and that red.*”

Never since the days of Thomas Conecte were the ladies more severely vituperated than for following the example of their Sovereign. The Puritan writers, who began now to make themselves heard as an influential body, were unsparing in their abuse, invoking sacred as well as profane justice on the pride of the upper classes. The writers generally speak of the sudden madness for new fashions that infected all classes, and the grave historian, Holinshed, says, “*Nothing is more constant in England than inconstancy of attire.*” Stubbes, the famous “*anatomizer of abuses*,” fell most heavily upon them, declaring that they made themselves look “*rather like grim, stern monsters, than chaste Christian women;*” and is particularly disgusted with their wreathed and crested hair, to which, he says, “*was hanged bugles, owches, rings, gold, silver, glasses, and such other childish gewgawes.*” But his utmost horror is reserved for false hair dyed “*of what colour they list,*” and ear-rings. “*They are so far bewitched,*” he exclaims, “*as they are not ashamed to make holes in their ears whereat they hang rings, and other jewels of gold and precious stones.*”

All these satirists were incompetent to reflect on the general commercial value of these freaks of fashion ; or the money circulated (which would else have been hoarded) and the tradesmen enriched, in the gratification of fancies which were, at the worst, follies, and not crimes as they almost made them appear. At any rate, Pride conquered, and Satire became innocuous where it desired to do most harm. In the reign of James I. the ladies still decorated their heads as sumptuously as before ; and we cannot resist giving one stanza of "Will Bagnall's ballet," as a specimen at once of its style and its author's bitterness ; a trait which he had in common with many others :—

"At the devil's shops you buy
A dress of powdered hair,
On which your feathers flaunt and fly ;
But I'd wish you have a care,
Lest Lucifer's self, who is not prouder,
Do one day dress up your hair with a powder !
O women, monstrous women,
What do you mean to do ?"

The downfall of Monarchy and the uprise of Puritanism gave a final blow to these fashions, and close-cut hair, bundled up in quoifs of linen tied close round the chin, or crammed into velvet caps of narrowest dimensions, was for a time in the ascendant. It was not till the Restoration that the hair and the spirits of the ladies were allowed to flow free. If Charles's Court had been less licentious, but only honestly gay, the change would have been the better for England. Unfortunately, the King set the example of going to the very opposite of Puritanism, and his Court soon became a scandal to the age. The ladies followed the style adopted by their sisters of the Court of Louis XIV., and wore their hair at the Restoration flowing at each side of the head, in thick masses of curl, upon the shoulders. In the course of the reign the fashion altered, and the mass was raised in a towering row of curls and ribands to the summit of the head. This new style, also imported from France, was singularly stiff and unbecoming. It was termed a *Fontange*, from the name of its inventor ; it originated in an accident, was established in a temporary whim by the *Grand Monarque*, and disfigured ladies' heads until the accession of the House of Hanover. Its invention may be thus simply narrated : The Court ladies of France were in the habit of combing the hair up from the forehead in a series of curls, entwined with rows of pearl ; and such a head-dress was worn by Mademoiselle de Fontange at a hunting-party held by Louis XIV. in person, at Vincennes. The day was a windy one, and the lady was greatly troubled to keep her high curls in place ; at last, she hit upon the notable plan of securing them more firmly with her coloured silken garters. The King, much pleased with the



effect thus accidentally produced, implored her to adopt it generally (which of course she was too complacent to refuse), and the Court ladies one and all "followed suit" by arranging theirs in coloured ribands the very next morning,—and the fashion was established.

Notwithstanding its free origin, it lacked freedom of design as ultimately arranged by Court fashionables, and was always one of the stiffest and ugliest of coiffures. Yet, like the horrible modern hat, it became almost universal in Europe; and ladies disfigured themselves willingly when Louis XIV. gave his sanction to the fashion. As if to jest upon their own inconveniences, this mass of riband and curl, so difficult to adjust and keep in due position, was re-christened by the ladies, and called a *commode*; under that name it is frequently mentioned by writers of the time of William III. and Anne. Portraits of the latter Queen generally exhibit her head surmounted by this coiffure, to which the English sometimes gave the name of *tower*,—a designation more befitting than the French one. It gradually died out in the form of high-plaited caps over the forehead, becoming less and less during the reigns of Georges I. and II.; making its last appearance on the heads of charity-school girls—those unfortunate recipients of the dregs of fashion.

The cheerful adoption of inconveniences, uglinesses, and even indelicacies in costume, originating in high quarters, is one of the most remarkable phases of fashion in all ages. The less that is said about the origin of hoops, the better. A fawn-coloured tint for linen was adopted at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and called "Isabella-colour," to keep in countenance the lady of that name, wife of the Arch-Duke Albert, Governor of the Low Countries, when the fearful religious war raged there; and the Arch-Duchess vowed not to change her linen till Ostend was taken. She had to wait three years before her solemn oath permitted the aid of a laundress, and this tint was the consequence. When Diana of Poitiers became the favourite of the French King she was a widow, so mourning-colours were the fashion at Court, and all that makes death hideous; for, not only were death's-head rings worn, but pendent jewels in the form of skulls, and even little gold coffins, with lugubrious inscriptions outside and hideous skeletons within. Patches originated in a natural desire to hide wens and blotches; great ruffs to conceal wens in the neck; falling hair to hide unequal shoulders; red hair to keep in countenance our Elizabeth—although it was previously hated as "Judas-colour," and all kinds of moral imputations affixed to its natural growth. It may be almost safely affirmed, that *outré* fashions have generally an apologetic or evil origin.

France did not monopolize the ruling and setting of fashions until the *éclat* of Louis's Court at Versailles made an imitation of its follies and extravagances the ruling passion at other seats of sovereignty. In the reign of our own Elizabeth, and during the early half of the seventeenth century, Germany, Italy, and other countries, gave the fashion of various

articles of clothing adopted by the English, who were then notorious for selecting "bits" of dress from all countries. Thomas Heywood, the dramatist, thus speaks, in his whimsical play on the story of Lucrece, 1638 :—

"The Spaniard loves his ancient slop,
The Lombard his Venetian,
And some like breechless women go,
The Russ, Turk, Jew, and Grecian :
The thrifty Frenchman wears small waist,
The Dutch his belly boasteth ;
The Englishman is for them all,
And for each fashion coasteth."

The prettiest of the German fashions adopted at this period by ladies was the velvet hat, cut, and decorated with ribands, gold thread, and *aiguillettes*. Sebastian Vrançx, whose characteristic designs devoted to the fashions of different nations were beautifully engraved by Peter de Iode, has furnished us in his "*Germanicus habitus*," with the graceful specimen here copied. The caul in which the lady's hair is concealed is quite like that now worn by young ladies ; it is a convenient and very ancient fashion, and was generally adopted in England during the fourteenth century.



The curious series of woodcuts illustrative of female costume, copied by Jost Amman, and published in 1586, gives many specimens of these head-dresses ; the collection is curious for its delineation of very many quaint costumes worn by the lower classes, some being quite startling in their simple unadorned ugliness. One is selected as a specimen, but by no means chosen as the strangest to be found in the volume. It is worn by a Bohemian peasant woman, and at least has the merit of enclosing the head well, and being furnished with a convenient handle for removing this extinguisher when required.

Having brought our remarks to that period when the last female Sovereign sat on the English throne, we may confine ourselves to the fashions of the English ladies solely. Queen Anne was content to follow the costume as set by the Court of Versailles, and wore the Fontange, and its modifications, without originating aught that was striking in dress. Herself, and her ruler—the famous Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough—appear to have been too much absorbed in politics to lead fashions, and were content to follow them. With the accession of the House of Hanover came a heavy German Court, with no taste for "foreign frippery." During the reigns of the first and second Georges, the ladies of England seem to have affected a simplicity that was ultimately carried to an almost unbe-

coming extent, giving them the appearance of servant-girls or milk-maids. Plain gowns, with close-fitting sleeves, long white aprons, and straw hats of plainest and smallest proportions, were the prevailing modes, and there was little outward distinction between Countess and Kitchen-maid. Caps were equally plain, and consisted of a mere caul, with a narrow frill and scanty ribands. It was not till a younger Sovereign brought a Queen upon the English throne that any striking change took place; but when the change did come, the freaks of fashion were indeed extraordinary; and, from 1765 until the end of the last century, it may be reasonably doubted if anything more absurd was ever invented, and worn, than some of the head-dresses then adopted by the ladies.

A few years before this a very whimsical head-dress appeared, thus noticed in the periodical called *The Connoisseur*, No. 112, where is given a letter describing a lady's head-dress in 1756: "Instead of a cap, the present mode is for every female to load her head with some sort of carriage." The milliners termed them *cabrioles*, or *caprioles*, and one is described as "designed for the head of a lady of quality," which, says the author, "I surveyed with much admiration, and, placing it on the palm of my hand, could not help fancying myself Gulliver taking up the Empress of Lilliput in her state-coach. The vehicle itself was constructed of gold threads, and was drawn by six dapple greys of blown glass, with a coachman, postilion, and gentleman within, of the same brittle manufacture." The effect of these inventions may be judged from our cut, copied from a contemporary print.



In a poem of the same period, entitled a "Modern Morning," and descriptive of a lady's toilet, she calls to her maid,—

"Nelly! where is the creature fled?
Put my post-chaise upon my head!"

The enormous perukes worn by gentlemen during the first half of this century having fallen into disuse, and many wearing their own hair, the wig-makers and hair-dressers, naturally alarmed at the decay of their trade, seem to have devoted their attention to the ladies, and induced them to adopt a fashion which loaded their heads with a mountain of hair, and gave a fresh impetus to both professions. In the year 1765 the "master peruke-makers" went the length of petitioning the King "on the almost universal decline of the trade, occasioned by the present mode of men in all stations wearing their own hair," which they grieve over most lugubriously, and beg His Majesty to set his face against. But the wits of the day only ridiculed their complaints, and jestingly framed another petition from "the company of *body-carpenters*," imploring the King to wear a wooden leg of their manufacture himself, and to enjoin all his servants to appear in the Royal presence with one upon the right leg also.

The ladies head-dress, when due attention had been directed to it, was of somewhat rapid growth. It commenced with a series of most elaborate

forms of plaiting and curling the hair. Fair heads were puzzled over the most abstruse disquisitions as to which of these would be most appropriate to certain styles of face. Barbers now began to talk philosophically of their profession, and to blow their own trumpets bravely. One of them assures us, that all his brethren "ought to be thoroughly versed in physiognomy, and must have a particular regard to the complexion and features of those he is employed to dress." The greatest and most celebrated member of the profession in France appears to have been *le Sieur Legros*, who published, in 1768-9, two quarto volumes, comprising descriptions and engravings of one hundred different modes of dressing the hair. He established an *Academie des Coiffures* in Paris; he honoured all his *élèves* by giving them a sort of written degree, signed and sealed by himself; and with true French vanity he chose for the device of his seal a design indicative of his own position in an envious world. He is represented upon it as if secure on the summit of a pyramid, while at the base a herd of wretched curs try in vain to ascend, as they bark and yelp at the distinguished hair-dresser raised so high above them! The *Sieur* and his book became the rage in Paris. "Every lady's toilet is furnished with one of them, very elegantly bound, and coloured to a very high degree of perfection," says the English engraver, George Bickham, who published a selection from these plates in 1768, for the use of the English ladies.

It was by gradually building up their curls, and adding ribands and feathers, that the heads assumed the alarming dimensions they reached about 1773. They towered half a yard above the forehead, and were flanked by huge curls, with feathers above all, and ropes of pearls and jewels hung over the entire mass. "Every lady who wishes to dress her hair with taste and elegance," says a writer of the time, "should purchase an elastic cushion exactly fitted to her head. Then, having combed out her hair thoroughly, and properly thickened it with powder and pomatum, let her turn it over her cushion in the reigning model. Let her next divide the sides into divisions for curls, and adjust their number and size from the same models. If the hair be not of sufficient length to reach the cheeks, it will be necessary to procure an addition to it, which is always to be had ready made, and matched to every colour." The portrait of the Countess of Sefton, 1774, here copied, will exhibit the general form of this head-dress, but not in its full monstrosity. The pointed lace cap over it gives it much of the character of the horned head-dresses described at the commencement of this essay.



Abundant employment was ensured to fashionable hair-dressers while this taste for high and elaborate hair-dressing was in vogue. Ladies submitted to all kinds of inconveniences in indulging the fashion. On public occasions, such as Birthdays at Court or County Balls, the demand for dressers exceeded the supply; and girls of spirit, who were

determined to appear in full costume, and be quite sure of no disappointment with barbers, took time by the forelock, had their heads dressed a day or two before the appointed period of meeting, and sat up for a night or two propped in chairs, with pillows under their precious curls to prevent disarrangement. In an ordinary way, a head, when full-dressed, was too elaborate a thing to be often disturbed, and the following extract, from a periodical called *The Old Maid*, records a conversation with a lady, who frankly owns that three weeks had passed since hers was "made up":—

"Three weeks, Madam," said I; "ha'n't you been a-bed since that?" "Regularly every day." "Pray, Madam, don't that lay you under the necessity of dressing your hair every evening when you rise?" "Oh, lord, no!" says Miss, smiling at my ignorance; "a head properly made up with pins, paste, and pomatum, will keep a month very well." As she talked of her head in the style of pickled pork, I ventured to ask her whether the paste and pomatum would keep as long? "Certainly," said she, "if prepared with the *veritable eau de fleurs des arbres*."

The advertisements of the day abound with notices of washes and poisons to use in the hair and prevent the generation of various living things which so much powder and pomatum would encourage. The current literature of the time abounds in details of the state of these fashionable heads, which cannot now be alluded to, but was satirized or seriously lamented in the plainest language, but of course without effect, until the polite world got tired of the inconvenient, unhealthy, and ugly fashion. A cap of monstrous proportion was invented to cover the whole mass, and its top-heavy character will be best understood from the engraving here copied from a print dated 1776. When ladies ventured out, it could scarcely be on a windy day; but, for their convenience, a titled lady at Bath (then the very focus of fashion) invented a head-covering, thus described in the *Universal Magazine* of 1765:—



"It is neither like the simple beehive, nor the magnificent umbrella, nor yet the tail of the bathing-machine at Margate. It is called a *caracan*; and the wearer, more exactly than anything I can think of, resembles our old butterwoman of Windsor jogging on and nodding in her one-horse cart, with the covering of a lumbering tilt over her head. This bonnet consists of whalebone formed in large rounds, which, at a touch, throws down over the face a blind of white sarcenet. An appendage of a *pilgrim* hangs from behind, by way of covering the neck; than all which you will not conceive anything more heartily preposterous."

That prince of caricaturists, Gillray, devoted some of his best works to satirizing the absurd fashions he saw daily worn. But all was as

ineffective as the arguments against crinoline in the present day, though backed by so many fatal instances of danger to life. Upward, and still upward, shot these mountains of hair, which reached the greatest point of their extravagance about 1780. An example is here given from a print published at that time; and it will be noticed that great groups of feathers were added to the mass of curls, ribands, and jewelled chains, that composed the *coiffure*. Anstey, the author of the once popular and humorous *New Bath Guide*, in his poem, "The lection Ball," tells, very laughably, the tale of a country Miss, who determines to cut a great figure at this Ball, and the means she adopts to secure to herself a commanding head-dress. The substructure is composed of her father's cast-off wig:—



"Those curls, which a barber would view with despair,
She did coax, twist, and twine, with such skill and such care,
With combs, pins, and paste, make such frequent attacks on,
She triumph'd at last, and subdued the old Caxon;
Which done, she the front in a cushion did wrap,
Till the foretop stood up like a Grenadier's cap,
On which all her jewels at once she display'd.

Not a diamond or pearl that was less than my thumb!
Then deck'd with fair fruits, and gay flow'rets, all twin'd
In a posy as thick as a besom, behind;
The merry old Bob gave his ringlets to flow,
And dangle like sausages all in a row."

The finish to the performance consists in depriving the old farm-yard cock of his tail-feathers, which are made to nod imposingly over the summit of the head-dress. It must be borne in mind, that although this is written in a spirit of caricature, the fashion had so much of that element in itself, that it did not leave much for the wits of the day to imagine in the way of absurdity. The *Lady's Magazine* of June, 1775, depicts "two ladies in the newest dress, from a drawing taken at Ranelagh" during the previous month. One gives the back view of a lady's head-dress, here copied. It is valuable, as we seldom obtain an idea of that part of the person in engravings of costume. The hair is described as turned up flat from the forehead over a cushion, combed far back, and arranged very broadly behind in rows of heavy curls, "or, rather, the hair tied in large bows or knots," the lower part gathered into a bag, or club; above all, lace lappets; and sometimes three large feathers—pink, blue, or white—nodded over the whole.



The year 1783 was remarkable for the experiments made by Montgolfier and others with balloons. They attracted the utmost atten-

tion in Paris, and the ladies there hit on the bright idea of constructing their enormous head-dress "*en ballon*." The balloon mania extended to England, and a globular, or pear-shaped mass of hair, crowned our grandmothers also. Once having achieved the form of a true sphere, the French ladies discarded the balloon, and dressed their heads *à la zodiaque*, by placing broad bands of blue riband, covered with silver stars, across it. Fashionable head-gear, like the frog in the fable, had now swelled to its utmost extension, and a collapse took place. The freaks played with the hair were now transferred to the hat or bonnet, and Paris poured forth a series of inventions, that, like the showman's lions, "must be seen to be believed," so ugly and so monstrous are many of them. We must be content with one example from the large number, and that the most commonly worn. The original bears date 1789. This pyramidal bonnet of light silk is

trimmed with lace, and has bunches of fly-fringe, planted on wires, curled around it; it descends on the masses of curl like a flower-pot or an extinguisher, yet it found favour in the eyes of the damsels of that day, who, like their grand-daughters, are willing to accept any ugliness in dress that comes "from Paris direct." In this, as in many other instances, we may trace the recurrence of old types. Here we are reminded again of the steeple head-dress of Normandy, that never-dying fashion, which spread even into Asia. There was, about this time, also worn a light bonnet of gauze and silk riband, in which Sir Joshua Reynolds has painted many of his fair sitters, which is identical in style with that depicted upon the women of Brabant in the series of cuts, published in 1586, by Jost Amman, to which we have already alluded, and from which the specimen is here copied, and contrasted with the more modern English bonnet.



In 1796, a hat with a very wide brim became fashionable. The hair was worn lower, and fell upon the neck in heavy curls. The ladies displayed their locks in as great profusion as ever; but they hung down the back below the shoulders, and the height of their heads was diminished. It required a large-rimmed hat to cover the flowing mass; hence the invention of this hat, which was trimmed with swathes of riband, and crowned by bunches of feathers, as shown in our engraving. The jokers did not let the new fashion escape, and the caricaturists showed it no mercy. In one of



these satirical engravings we see a husband, and an entire family, protected from rain under the lady's hat. The children march two and two beneath the front brim, the lady keeps her good man close to her side, while the back part of the brim affords ample shelter for the nursemaid with the baby. Some of the best of Gillray's admirable works are devoted to satires on the fashions. The happy knack he had of seeing the weak point of a subject, and bringing it prominently forward, was never better displayed than in the series he devoted to dress.

As the century closed, the monstrous head-dresses grew smaller, and in 1799 changed into a close, but intricate knot of plaits and curls. Our cut, copied from a figure in Heidehoff's *Gallery of Fashion*, shows the



simple and unobtrusive character now taken by the ladies' head-gear, with one exception—the addition of large, stiff, upright feathers towering above the forehead. Most frequently a single feather, half a yard in height, shot up in solitary dignity over the brow. This fashion lasted for several years.

The close-fitting hair was packed in a shell-shaped bonnet when the feather was discarded. These bonnets were termed *shells*, or *melons*, according to their general design. The shell was a series of convolutions, somewhat after the manner of that of the limpet. The melon

resembled a section of the fruit, fitted tightly on the head, and ribbed in different tints of green. Our cut exhibits both styles, as depicted in the fashionable gazettes of the day.

It will obviously be impossible to descant on the variety of head-dresses adopted during the first quarter of the present century. We must be content to note a few of the most prominent. The long war with France, and the implacable enmity of Napoleon, shut out French fashions from our native milliners:—but before the fall of that Emperor the English ladies had adopted the ugliest and most unbecoming costume. The dress, once so enormous, was pinched round the figure, and sometimes damped to make it fit closer, so that stepping across a gutter was almost a dangerous risk for the fair wearers to run, lest “a severance of continuity,” to use a “refined” expression, should be the consequence. Everything was tight-fitting, ugly, and mean. Many ladies, with Queen Charlotte to countenance them, preferred to wear, very constantly as a walking-dress, cloth pelisses cut like a man's great-coat, and adopted the hideous beaver-hat as a head-dress. Crops became fashionable for the hair, which brought it tightly down under a velvet band, from which a few corkscrew curls straggled over the forehead. The change wrought upon all this, when Paris wa



again opened to English visitors, was sudden and remarkable. The French revenged Waterloo by caricaturing the English ladies who came among them in the most unsparing style, and yet with a humour that is perfectly irresistible. Curiously enough the Parisians were charmed with one of the ugliest fashions introduced by their unwelcome visitors. The Duchess of Oldenburg appeared in a bonnet of such commanding size that it excited universal attention, and became "the rage." What they made of it may be best guessed by a reference to our cut, copied from the figure of a French lady, dated July 1815. It had an enormous caul, was decorated with bows and flowers, sometimes with high bunches of riband; it had a very narrow brim, and was secured below the chin by a sash of gauze. Enormous bows and piles of small flowers, wreaths of creeping-plants and gigantic pinks and roses, were gradually added, upon, around, and above it, in the course of the next three years; so that its effect was perfectly startling. One of George Cruikshank's best caricatures, "*Le Retour de Paris*; or, the Niece presented to her Relations by her French Governess," depicts the astonishment of a plain country family, in their tight dresses and cropped hair, at seeing their niece "transmogrified" into a *Parisienne*, with a very short dress overloaded with ornament, and a bonnet of portentous size. Other caricaturists were by no means idle at this time, and the freaks of fashion gave abundant employ to pencil and graver.



As the crown of these high bonnets lowered, the brim expanded, until the true "coal-scuttle" form was attained. An elegantly-executed French engraving, dated 1819, gives its shape as we reproduce it. It reigned without a rival for some years, and only succumbed to an equally monstrous novelty. Indeed, the head-dress of ladies from 1815 to 1830 may be broadly characterized as a successive series of monstrosities. Chief among them was the head-dress *à-la-Giraffe*, when the hair was uplifted in huge bows, as represented in the accom-



panying engraving, to which great additions were made in false hair, bows of riband, and huge combs to support the mass. It successfully rivalled the head-dress of 1790. Enormously broad-brimmed, high-crowned hats, were worn from 1825 to 1830. It was a serious public inconvenience at theatres and exhibitions, and has been alluded to by Tom Moore, as—



"That build of bonnet, whose extent
Should, like a doctrine of dissent,
Puzzle church doors to let it in."

The Cruikshanks, Heath, and other caricaturists, were unsparing in their ridicule. Heath gave a view of the Royal Academy Exhibition Room, in which no picture could be seen in consequence of a blockade of bonnets. Their enormous size may be now best comprehended by the serious pattern prints of fashions then published as a guide to bonnet-makers and their patrons. The makers were now popularly called "bonnet-builders;" and one of Heath's best engravings depicts the interior of a workshop furnished with scaffolding and ladders for the use of the young ladies who are constructing bonnets, which are moved on frame-works by ropes and pulleys. A "dreadful catastrophe" occurs in one part of the workshop, which is thus narrated, "Madame M——'s patent bonnet-suspender, has, on account of the lightness of the roof, suddenly given way; several of the young ladies remain crushed beneath the ponderous bonnets; every effort was making to get out the bodies when our reporter left."



We may, perhaps, draw down an amount of "virtuous indignation" on our own heads, should we venture to treat with equal levity the ugly or useless head-gear of more modern time;—but may we not venture to prophesy of the future from the experience of the past, and fairly calculate that the reign of small bonnets and large skirts will be naturally succeeded by a general adoption of large hats and tight dresses? How else is the balance of fashion, which delights in extremes, to be maintained, and the coveted "novelty" ensured? It is amusing to observe how the oft-despised fashions of the past are tamely adopted in the present, when the order issues forth from the despotic *ateliers* of the Parisian *modistes*.

NEEDLEWOMEN.

THE ST. JAMES'S MAGAZINE for December last contained a brief appeal, by the Editor, on behalf of that large class of female workers—the Needlewomen of the Metropolis. That appeal, though explicit enough, was, however, only incidental, and naturally arose, as the reader will recollect, out of an incident in the story, "Can Wrong be Right?" But, incidental as it was, it seems to have excited a degree of attention quite unexpected. Numerous letters have since then been received, and various inquiries have been made for particulars in reference to Needlewomen and the Institution for their employment that had been referred to. Now, however much disposed the conductor of this Magazine may be to aid in serving those who are the subject of inquiry, it is clearly beyond her power to furnish detailed information to all who severally desire it. Considering, however, the interest that has been aroused, and notwithstanding that much has been already said and written on the subject, she has thought it desirable to procure for these pages some account of the present condition of Needlewomen, and the means that have been adopted for the improvement of their unhappy condition.

How to employ our surplus population of women is admitted to be one of the most serious problems of the age. Much attention has of late been given to this subject, and many openings for female labour have been sought in various new directions. Nor are the schemes that have been devised few and unimportant. On the contrary, numerous plans have been proposed, tried, and found practical. Women now enter into competition with the other sex in many fields of labour from which they were formerly excluded, and perform duties that heretofore were supposed to belong exclusively to men. They have become compositors in printing offices, bookbinders, publishers, secretaries to institutions, copying clerks, clerks in telegraph offices, painters, sculptors, wood engravers, art-designers in manufactories, and, doubtless, follow many other similar avocations. For all these pursuits, however, previous training is requisite. Apprenticeship, or some special sort of education, or the possession of capital, is found to be necessary before women feel themselves qualified to embark in any one of them. But there is one calling they claim as theirs of right, and for the pursuit of which no preliminary education is thought to be needed. Let Inclination or Necessity prompt, and what woman who does not believe herself capable of earning her bread by the exercise of her needle? She counts upon this occupation as one on which she can enter at a moment's notice; and it is to this she invariably flies whenever poverty or other necessity compels her to get her own living.

The frightful frequency of such necessity in our own time is known to all.

By the census recently taken it is to be seen that, in London alone, there are no fewer than 65,128 women who returned themselves as sub-

sisting on the fruits of their needle. Of these, 43,928 are milliners and dressmakers, the remaining 21,200 being seamstresses and shirtmakers. We are informed by competent and unprejudiced authority, that, taken at a low calculation, *more than one-half of them are at this present moment struggling against misery and want.*

Thirty thousand women struggling with want and against profligacy, in this, the richest city of the world!

Let us see how they struggle.

Although the misfortunes of Needlewomen have been long known by the public, and have been the occasion of no little sympathy with their lot, people in general have still but a very inadequate conception either of the real extent or of the dismal intensity of their distress. Their number is so great as to constitute them a mass, and many who can readily sympathize with an individual are unable to feel for a crowd. With Sterne, their hearts will bleed for the single captive shut up in the noisome dungeon, but are unaffected at the picture of millions born to no inheritance but slavery; they are interested in the account of a murder, but can read tidings of a slaughter with unconcern. Thus it unfortunately happens that vast numbers of women, although meeting with sympathy of that general sort which is excited at distress of every kind, do yet not receive that active sympathy which is usually accorded only to some single object, or to some class of sufferers under extraordinary circumstances. There is, however, no class of our fellow-subjects that more deserves our sympathy and assistance than the London Needlewomen. Their condition is a reproach to our civilization. That there should be thousands of suffering women who give their whole life to work, and even then can scarce procure enough to sustain that life, is a most unnatural state of things. That women should spend their days in labour that does not profit, surely indicates a blemish on the society wherein it is required. The sufferings borne by these women are, when told, scarcely credible. Hood's "Song of the Shirt" was no overdrawn picture of their condition, but a literal description of their ways of life. And as it was then, so in great measure is it now. Thousands of industrious women are, without doubt, at this present time suffering from, and sinking under, the weight of overstrained labour to which they are subjected. They work in small rooms, close, confined, and ill-ventilated; the hours of labour are from early morn till near midnight; and they earn—scarce enough to keep away starvation. The prices paid to these labourers are notoriously low. From a little work by the present Lady Superintendent of the Needlewomen's Institution, who made diligent inquiries on the subject in districts where the poorest class of Needlewomen live, we learn that for the finest stitched gentlemen's dress-shirts women receive from 1s. 6d. to 2s. a piece; for those commonly worn, 10d. It takes a day to make the latter, and the Needlewomen have to find their own cotton (2d. a reel) and candles. These are the average prices: one large outfitting establishment pays at the rate of 2½d. a shirt!

This will afford an idea of the prices paid; other kinds of work are paid for at a similar low rate. For making silk parasols they get 1s. 1d. per dozen; for large umbrellas, 1s. 4d. Sixpence a pair only is paid for heavy corduroy trousers, and a woman is unable to make more than one of these per day—in twelve hours, that is to say, for they of course work much longer than during the natural day. For gentlemen's oilskin coats—exclusive of the binding, which is done by machinery—1s. 4d. is paid; for boys' coats, 1s. They receive for double-breasted waistcoats 10d., and for those of a common sort, 3d. A woman, who was working at shirts for convicts, which she had taken from a sub-contractor, received for payment 1d. each, out of which sum she found her own cotton; for flannel drawers she got 2d. per pair. No class of needlework can be named but what is paid for at the same inadequate rate.

Let us now see what has been done to ameliorate the lot of this large and unfortunate section of the community.

Various plans have, at different times, been suggested for their relief; but none were found adequate to meet the chief difficulties by which they are beset. It was known that needlework is not usually given out to needlewomen themselves from the establishment for which it is done, unless the women seeking employment can deposit a sum (varying from 5s. to 20s.) as a security for the materials entrusted to them. Since, however, in the majority of cases, a small proportion of them only are in circumstances to do this, the work is contracted for by a responsible agent, who underlets it to the women at a reduced scale of payment; or, as often happens, lets it out in smaller portions to sub-contractors, from whom they, of course, receive a still lower rate of remuneration. Such being the case, it was thought that the intervention of an independent society between the employers and the employed would, by obviating the necessity for these contractors, and giving the women what would otherwise be deducted by the middle man—be the means of effecting much good; would materially improve their condition; would, at all events, enable them, with persevering industry and strict economy, to obtain the means of procuring a decent livelihood. The objections by which the scheme was at first met having been disposed of, its promoters commenced operations on a small scale early in the spring of 1860. With respect to the expenses of management, &c., it was believed that, if a sufficient number of workers could be employed, a deduction of a penny in the shilling earned by each woman would, with economical handling, enable the Society to become almost self-supporting. In order to enable the promoters to try the experiment on a limited scale at first, Mr. Stephen Cave, M.P., very generously made himself responsible for a year's rent of the house No. 26, in Lamb's Conduit Street.

Thus originated THE INSTITUTION FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF NEEDLEWOMEN.

Great good was immediately produced: From the uncertainty of

being able to obtain for them a sufficient employment, the names at first entered on the books were not numerous; but gradually the numbers increased; and, at the first meeting of the promoters of the Institution, held on the 13th of June, 1860—only a few months after its establishment—two hundred persons were stated to have had employment. Of those engaged, numbers had, during the inclement season before their admittance, been living on what resulted from the sale of their clothes, and had nothing left but the tattered garments in which they stood; some brought their pawn-tickets, begging for help to redeem the articles they had pledged; several had not tasted food for so long a time that they were too exhausted to work when work was supplied to them. All these women were of good character, and were well recommended. Nor were they exclusively of what is termed the lower orders. Some had been the wives of respectable shopkeepers; some were decayed gentlewomen, or governesses out of situations, whose respectable exterior formed a sad contrast with the effects of hunger and cold that might be traced in their faces; all had once seen days of sunshine.

As the Institution became known, the supply of work became greater, and the number of those employed was proportionately increased. The experience that had been derived from the working of the Society upon the principles of payment that had been adopted, confirmed on a limited scale the views of the founders. It soon became apparent that the accommodation in Lamb's Conduit Street was too restricted; the rooms were over-crowded with workwomen, and the Managers were under the necessity of refusing applicants, not only on account of having no work to give, but also from want of space. Induced by these considerations, and hopeful of being able to obtain large contracts from the Public Services, the Managers determined upon removing. They at once put their resolution into effect, and the Institution is now located in commodious premises at No. 2, in Hinde Street, Manchester Square, and has Branch establishments in various parts of the Metropolis.

During the year 1860, the first of the Society's existence, the amount received for work done was over £600. The current expenditure for superintendence, rent, fuel, gas, &c., was about £350, in addition to which sum £200 of subscribed capital was spent for furniture and fittings. Owing, however, to the fact that an adequate supply of work was uncertain, the number of women employed were too few to make the deduction of a penny in the shilling sufficient to cover the necessary expenses; so that the hope that had been entertained of making the Institution self-supporting was not realized. In May of the following year (1861), however, the promoters of the undertaking were in a position to take a more favourable view of its affairs. On the 11th of that month a *Conversazione* was held at the residence of H. A. Hankey, Esq., 38, Harley Street, for the purpose of aiding the Institution. The Earl of Shaftesbury was in the chair, and was supported by the Bishops of London and Oxford, and by about 200

ladies and gentlemen besides. The Report then read of the proceedings of the Institution for the previous twelve months, spoke most favourably of the success that had attended the efforts of the Society. At the beginning of January, a Government contract of 46,000 shirts was obtained; the contract price of which being defined, the Managers were enabled to calculate with tolerable accuracy, both their provision for labour and the remuneration they could afford. Since the contract had been entered on, 7,800 shirts had been made; and it is gratifying to learn from the Report, that out of the number, not a dozen had been stolen or pawned by those to whom they had been entrusted. The amount received from the Government on this contract was £771 14s. 6d. The price usually paid for shirts, under the ordinary contract system, is between 4d. and 5d. a piece: in many instances less. The Society pays 6d., and gives out the work with the collars and wristbands already made and stitched. This is looked upon by the women as equal to an advance of one-third on their wages, and it certainly enables them, by working hard all day, to earn a shilling—a sum, though small, considerably over what they could possibly have earned at the ordinary prices. The Society had also received an order from the Government for several hundreds of blouses, or soldiers' serge coats. The price received for the making of these is far better than what is paid for shirts, and consequently this kind of work is, we are told, eagerly coveted by the needlewomen. A woman can make one blouse a day, for which she is paid 1s. 9d., whilst under the ordinary system she would receive no more than 8d. or 1s. All other kinds of Government work are paid for at the same advanced rate of wages.

But, amongst the women that the Institution desires to relieve, a large number of them work far too well to be employed on the coarse material that goes to make up Government contracts. For these, therefore, is reserved the work that comes in from shops and from private sources. There is generally a liberal supply of this class of work, and the payment to be derived therefrom is comparatively high. Having lately paid a visit to Hinde Street, we were enabled to inspect the working of the Institution, and can speak, from personal communication with those that were there employed, of the vast benefits which it has conferred. The average number of women employed is about 200. Of these, all do not, of course, work on the premises. Whenever it is found practicable, women are permitted to take work to their own homes, having first complied with that obviously necessary rule of the establishment which requires of all who do so to have been for at least two days under the Matron's eye for the purpose of testing their capacity. Each one who takes work away leaves room for another applicant, and consequently as many as possible are thus employed. A great portion of the work received from Government, which is of a coarse description and suited to the inferior class of workwomen, is distributed to the Branch establishments in populous districts where such workers abound, and thence given out to

them to do at their own homes. But there is much that cannot be so distributed. The Government Inspectors are rigidly strict in their examinations of what is performed, and the Superintendents must exercise a constant supervision over women, to see that they "put in strong work," and adhere to the exact admeasurements that have been given. It is pleasant to know that many ladies give up considerable portions of their time to this supervision, and devote much pains to the self-imposed task. The personal interest and sympathy, thus exhibited, are valued at a high rate by those for whose benefit it is intended, and have an excellent effect upon their conduct, in rendering them susceptible to acts of kindness from others, and in teaching them to imitate such acts amongst themselves.

The in-door workers generally amount to seventy persons. Some come from far-distant quarters of the Metropolis, and carry with them what they can provide for their dinners. For these, and for all that choose, there is set apart a large kitchen, where they may themselves perform any little culinary operations that are needed. It was intended to provide all with tea by the funds derived from the penny in the shilling which is deducted from the gains of each workwoman. Since, however, the penny in the shilling is found to be quite inadequate to meet the expenditure for tea, light, cotton, fire, superintendence, &c., it must be apparent that the operations of the Society still depend for their continuance upon the results of public benevolence.

The various rooms in which the women are engaged are admirably lighted and ventilated, and afford a bright contrast with those gloomy abodes from which too many of their inmates have come, and to which they will again retire at night. The Lady Superintendent, who acts also as Secretary, and to whose exertions the Institution chiefly owes its origin, is indefatigable in her endeavours to promote its interests, and has thoroughly won the esteem of those by whom she is daily surrounded. Miss Barlee deserves all honour from those who respect energy and faith in a righteous cause.

The kind assistance which the promoters received when about to commence their undertaking in Lamb's Conduit Street has been increased. Thus aided, they have been enabled, as we have already stated, to extend their efforts to various parts of the Metropolis. There are now five Branch establishments in active operation. One of these, at No. 14, in Marlborough Square, Chelsea, was founded by a lady distinguished for her benevolence, and the active interest she takes in all schemes for the benefit of those whose lot is cast in misfortune. This lady (we see no reason for withholding the name of Mrs. Johnson, of Eaton Place) for some time, and at her sole cost, sustained the undertaking at a house in the King's Road; afterwards, however, the Rev. Mr. Blunt, Vicar of Chelsea, placed at her disposal a portion of a house in Marlborough Square, already known as a Servants' "Home." About forty-five women are constantly employed there;

of which number twenty-six work on the premises. Mrs. Johnson assists to defray all expenses that are necessarily incurred for light, fire, superintendence, &c., and also attends personally at stated times.

Another branch is located in apartments at 48, Park Street, Camden Town. The women in constant employ here do not exceed eight or ten; but the work that remains after they have been supplied is given out weekly to others, all of whom have been well recommended, and whose names are kept on the books.

A third Branch has been opened at 8, Custom-house Terrace, Victoria Docks, amongst the "Londoners over the Border." The Rev. E. Douglas has taken it under his charge.

The remaining two Branches are situated respectively at Notting Hill, and St. Philip's, Bethnal Green. This latter, in a most populous district, is surrounded by thousands of poor creatures eager for employment; and however great is the amount of work to be given out, the number of applicants always far exceeds those that are successful in obtaining it.

Amongst the many thousand Needlewomen of London, it is almost a hopeless task to benefit all at present. The existence, however, of an establishment where large numbers of the well conducted and the respectable of all ages can find regular employment, is a matter for which to be thankful. And the success that has hitherto attended the beneficent efforts of its founders and conductors will, we hope, be an incentive to others to imitate their example. We see no reason why the Society should not have a Branch in every parish in London, and why, instead of 500 women being employed, as at present, their number should not reach 5,000. The organization of Local Societies is a work we earnestly recommend to the attention of all those who are interested in the well-being of their fellow-creatures less favourably situated in life than themselves. Much good cannot but result even from the attempt to do so. The rich and the poor would be brought into more immediate contact; a personal interest would spring up between them; and the real wants and necessities of the one class could be better understood and relieved by the other, than by any vicarious method that could be adopted. And, should the attempt be successful, the success will confer still greater benefits. In every neighbourhood there would be set up a light to lighten the darkness of many a dreary home,—there would be a refuge for many a sick soul. Constant work—even during that much-dreaded time known to the London Needlewoman as the "slack" season—would be provided for the industrious and well-behaved, and the very presence of such an Institution in a district would tend to act as a premium upon good character and industry.

A TANGLED SKEIN.

A ROMANCE.

BY ALBANY FONBLANQUE, JUN.

CHAP. VII.

IN WHICH A TRIUMPH IS PREPARED FOR CAPTAIN FRANKLAND, V.C.

I MUST tell you that the fib which Sir George Tremlett wrote to his son was not a gratuitous one. He had a motive that was, upon the whole, a good one. With all his faults and foibles he had one redeeming point: he loved his soldier-boy dearly, and was proud of him. He had little else, poor fellow, to be proud of. The young dragoon bore the good old name that he had weakly given up. If all the ironmasters in Staffordshire could turn their ore into gold, and place it in one glittering heap around the Throne, they could not buy the little bit of bronze that hung on Captain Stephen Frankland's breast. Mr. Francis Tremlett was already a very influential person in his way, and would be a rich man; but the Bayard of India had not yet pressed his hand and said of him, "If all our Officers had been like that young man, Sir, the Well of Cawnpore would have been pure to this day." No, no! They had taken away his house, his lands, and his name; but the glory of his gallant son was still his own. Of that no one could deprive him. So he resolved that Stephen should have a public reception at Tremlett Towers—a grand one, if possible; but at any rate a reception that would be talked about. Therefore, having accounted with much circumlocution, and I am afraid a fib or two, for knowing that his son had returned, he broached the subject to My Lady, and as usual Mr. Francis Tremlett managed to join in the conversation. It was a curious fact, that My Lady's boudoir door never closed after Sir George but it admitted in less than five minutes afterwards his second son.

Lady Tremlett opened her pretty blue eyes wider than they had been opened for many a day. "Dear Stevie," she said: "I'm so glad! It will be quite a treat to have him home again. But how unkind to go to those Trehernes instead of coming straight to us."

"You see, my love, Kernden Rectory was all in his way," replied her lord, in an apologetic tone. "Besides, it was so good of him to take charge of his poor young friend's sword."

"I really cannot see what clergymen should want with swords," observed My Lady, peevishly. "Was it a very valuable one?"

"I did not see it," said Sir George; "but——"

"I daresay it was not," interrupted his wife. "Of course it was very good-natured of dear Stevie to take so much trouble; but I daresay the carriage cost as much as it was worth."

"No doubt," Mr. Francis Tremlett observed; "but you see there is a sentiment about these sort of things which some people think it right to

indulge in. For my part, I think it a very unwise practice to preserve such so-called relics; they only perpetuate feelings of regret, which as Christians it is our duty to smother. Nay, sometimes they cause weak-minded persons to murmur at the decrees of Providence in a manner that is absolutely wicked."

"Dear Francis," said his mother, patting him affectionately on the arm with her jewelled fingers, "how cleverly you speak; you are so very sensible."

Sir George did not appear to join in these commendations. He turned round rather sharply upon his second son, and said, "Suppose your brother had fallen instead of young Treherne in that charge, would *you* have grudged his stainless sword a place of honour in this house, or failed to appreciate the kindness of a brother officer who would bring it you?"

Mr. Francis flushed a little under this direct appeal, and for a moment was a little disconcerted. His mother came to his rescue; and by the time she had asked Sir George how he could suppose anything so dreadful, and asserted that neither she nor Francis could possibly recover from the shock of losing dearest Stevie, he was quite ready with a speech in reply.

"There is no argument," he said, with more than his usual sententiousness, "that I disapprove of so thoroughly as the *argumentum ad hominem*. I was speaking, as I generally do, upon *principle*. Perhaps, in the confusion of mind which would naturally arise out of such an occurrence (a capital word that, is it not, for the death of a brother on the field of battle?) as you have supposed, I might perhaps give way to a weakness which in calmer moments I should overcome. But this is nothing to the purpose. I have said, and I repeat, that I consider it foolish, and, indeed, irreligious, to preserve things which may keep alive unavailing regrets. It is our duty, as I before intimated, as Christians, not to murmur at the decrees of Providence."

Whilst this little sermon was being delivered, Lady Tremlett shook her head in sorrowful assent, and declared that she quite coincided in the opinions so nicely expressed by dearest Francis. Sir George had good reasons for not wishing to annoy that sage of two-and-twenty, and so let his heartless twaddle go uncontested. "Well, well," he said, "it's no use arguing upon imaginary sorrows. Thank God we are spared what poor Mr. Treherne has had to go through. We have the wearer of the sword to welcome home—and—er—yes—," he continued, bustling about the room, and surveying the books upon the table,—“Has any one run away with last week's *Illustrated London News*?"

"Did you expect to find it here, my love? Do you not know, that ever since Francis returned from Oxford he has always filed the back numbers in the Library? dear fellow, he is so very neat."

"There is nothing that offends me so much as to see a room littered about with old newspapers," the "dear fellow" remarked. "You will

find the number you require with the rest." Another son would probably have offered to get what his father asked for, or, better still, have brought it without offering to do so. This "dear fellow," however, made no sign. Perhaps he objected to the performance of such little filial duties, upon principle. Sir George did not really want the paper. He only mentioned it to bring in, in his roundabout fashion, the subject that was upon his mind. "It is no matter just now; pray do not trouble yourself," he said. But his son had thrown himself back on a lounge, and reclined there gracefully, with the finger-points of either hand brought lightly together in front of his chest—a position common, as I have observed, to the instructors of youth—and appeared to require no such assurance and request to enable him to take his ease.

"I merely mentioned that number of the *Illustrated*," Sir George continued, fidgeting about the room—peering into this ornament and that, opening and shutting half a dozen books, and examining with much apparent attention things that he had seen fifty thousand times before, as was his wont when he had something to say and had not the heart to say it right out. "I only mentioned that number of the *Illustrated*, my love," he said, "to ask you if you had observed one of the pictures, how very much woodcutting has improved since I was a boy!"

"What picture?"

"Oh!—er—Well I think it was a—er—little fête at—at—Dear me—where was it? Oh, I remember, at Thornhill Grange, by Sir Hector Mainwaring, to celebrate the return of his wife's brother, Colonel Trevelyan, from foreign service. Did you read the account? It struck me as such a very nice idea, to call the tenantry and servants together, and give them a little treat to commemorate such an event. It creates so much good feeling amongst the lower orders, when they see a great county family so united and happy,—don't you think so, my dear?"

Now do you see what he is driving at?

My Lady declared there was nothing she enjoyed more than seeing people united and happy. How very foolish people were to be anything else! She remembered the engraving mentioned by Sir George very well; and there was a funny boy in the right-hand corner, who had a head like an egg and no features.

"An accident in the printing, I dare say," observed her husband, "but all the rest was beautifully clear. There was the carriage-and-four in which Colonel Trevelyan had been brought from the station, and the tenantry on horseback, and the labourers waving their hats and shouting, and the band playing, "See the Conquering Hero comes," and the triumphant arch, with the inscription, "Welcome to our brave Soldier"—was it not "welcome to our brave soldier," my love? Thank you, yes! I think you're right—incribed upon it in beautiful cut flowers. Dear me, yes; so it was, and very nice it must have looked. "Welcome to our brave Soldier" was so appropriate, don't you think so, my dear

Rhoda? You see, he had just returned from foreign service, and that capital fellow, Sir Hector Mainwaring, was glad to do him honour for his wife's sake."

"Do not you think, Sir," simpered Mr. Francis—(when he did not preach he simpered, and was always freezingly polite to his father)—"Do not you think, Sir, that it would be as well if you were to ask my mother at once for what you want?"

"For what I *want*, Francis?"

"My dear father, you must pray excuse me if I speak plain and grammatical English. It is a weakness that my intimacy with Paley and French has brought upon me. I should have said perhaps, what you *wish*. It has been plain to me for the last ten minutes that you have introduced the subject of that gathering at Thornhill Grange in order that one of us might suggest the propriety of having a similar affair here to commemorate my brother's return."

"My dearest Francis!" exclaimed Lady Tremlett; "how very quick you are; you must be a conjuror! And did you"—(this was to Sir George)—"really commence the conversation with this view?"

"Well—er—my sweetest life, I—er—did not exactly; that is, I meant—er—that if you thought—I mean if you liked—er—to set on foot such a thing, why then, of course—er—it would be a great—No, hang it! it would be no more than Stephen deserved;" and he ended with a burst.

"Deserve! Why he deserves anything, dear boy. I'm so glad you reminded us of this. I should never have thought of it;" said Lady Tremlett. "We will give him really a very nice reception, and write to the Editor of the *Illustrated London News* to come and take a drawing of it for his charming paper. Or perhaps Miss Lee would not mind making a sketch; she is so clever! And it might put something in her pocket, poor thing! What would they give her, Francis—come, you know everything—for making a sketch of Stephen's return? Seven and sixpence, or ten guineas, or—what?"

Francis gave some answer to this query which is not very important, and I dare say was quite inaccurate, whilst Sir George was bustling about the room, rubbing his hands together, and giving vent to expressions of almost childish delight at the success of his suggestion. Then he drew his chair close up to My Lady's sofa, kissed her hand very gallantly, and taking it in one of his own, patted and stroked it as though it were a little bird that wanted to get away.

"I was quite—quite sure you would be pleased with my idea," he said. "It was so like you to take the initiative—and all of your own accord to! Besides which, you have arranged it so cleverly. So, don't you think, my love—Stephen will be home on Saturday, you know!—that we had better arrange what is to be done? You have only to say the word, my love, that's all. We will not trouble you to exert yourself in any way—

Oh no! Now (with a pat at every word) tell me, dearest, what—shall—we—do?"

"Do?" reiterated the languid Rhoda; "why everything, of course! Won't we, Francis?"

"Much depends," that moral philosopher replied, "upon what you mean by 'everything.' I labour under a difficulty with regard to this proposal, which I will shortly explain. My brother Stephen, you see, is coming from India. Now, I am not prepared to sanction all that has been done in that country. I have yet to learn that the natives have been treated, during this so-called rebellion, in a proper and consistent manner. It may be, that the so-called rebellion itself might have been put an end to by other means than those for which my brother Stephen has been employed. I allude to the repressive military operations! And I could not think of allow—— I mean, I could not think of joining in any celebration which would make it appear as though they had my approval, and compromise me in any course I may hereafter think it desirable to take."

"Quite right," said My Lady. "Francis must on no account be compromised." She spoke, and so did her son, as though there was a probability of his being obliged, some day, to put the Governor-General of India in the corner for being a naughty boy!

"I think Francis need be under no apprehension," said Sir George, quietly. "I dare say we can manage to do honour to his brother without compromising him."

A merciful Providence gives fellows like Francis Tremlett exceedingly thick skins. She knows that they lay themselves open to cruel snubs, and hardens their vanity round them like plate armour or the scales of the hippopotamus, to ward off the darts of the enemy. The complacency with which young Tremlett took his snubbing, when he got into company that was not afraid of him, was charming in the extreme. Frequently he did not see what was meant, and smiled with the others, as though it were a good joke; but sometimes it dawned upon him, hours afterwards, when he got home, that he had been snubbed; and then he composed a withering reply to deliver next time it happened, and thought what a clever fellow he was to be so ready with his tongue. In the present instance he saw no sarcasm in his father's observation, and took it quite as a tribute to his grave misgivings about the conduct of the Indian Government. Lady Tremlett, as usual, echoed the sentiment last expressed, and was sure they could manage to do honour to dear Stephen without compromising dear Francis.

The philosopher softened under this incense, and explained that he was averse to a public demonstration; not as a brother, but as a Magistrate of the County—(the Lord Chancellor had been goose enough to put him into the Commission of the Peace). Still, he would be bound to take a leading part in it, and his conduct might be misrepresented when he

stood for the county. He thought, that if they were to put up one of the tents that had been used when he came of age, and gave the school children a treat of tea and buns therein, and intimated that there was no objection to the tenants coming, and calling out "huzza," if they liked, they would probably escape being compromised—do all that was necessary for the occasion.

"Necessary!" cried Sir George, bitterly. "Oh, pray understand me that nothing is *necessary*. Nothing that we can do here will add to the honours of a man who has won the Victoria Cross and the friendship of a Lawrence. In trying to do honour to Stephen we honour ourselves—that's all."

"You see, my dearest Francis, that Stephen is quite a celebrated person now," Lady Tremlett exclaimed. "Dear me, I wonder how many of those creatures he has killed. I wonder if he will look very cruel after it all! But about this fête! We must have everything very nice, particularly as it will all be in the papers. Now, what shall we do?"

"I am the worst person in the world to consult in such matters, my dear mother," Francis replied. "The erection of triumphant arches and similar trifling, is, you know, quite out of my line. Consult my father."

"Will you leave it all to me then?" cried Sir George, eagerly.

"By all means!" said his wife. "Of course, my dear George, I always meant to leave it to you. Pray do as you please, and let it be nice. Only do not tease me about details. Stop! there is one thing I must insist upon, and this is, that the printer is more careful over the picture. I will not have a boy with a head like an egg and no features, in the illustration of our receiving Stephen. I cannot bear to see boys without features."

"Do you mind me writing to Mrs. Coleman to ask the girls and Miss Lee to come and help me to make the arrangement?" said Sir George. "Miss Lee has such capital taste. Don't you remember how exquisitely she decorated the church last Christmas? It was all her arranging."

Lady Tremlett rose, and looked her husband full in the face, and a flash of pain seemed to pass over her countenance. It lasted but for an instant, and then she slowly sank back into her reclining posture, and only said, "Very well; do so," in a low voice, and with something like a sigh.

The truth is that Sir George was one of those silly old gentlemen who fancy they will be thought ungallant if they do not begin to flirt with a lady the moment they are introduced to her. In her early married life Lady Tremlett had grave reasons for being offended at this light conduct on the part of her spouse. But all jealous feelings had long ago worn out, with the passion of which jealousy is born. Do you think that any woman who loved her husband would let him feel that he was dependent upon her bounty for his daily bread? No! not if she had taken him from sweeping a crossing, and had all the gold in Australia for her marriage portion.

The letter was written and despatched to Ruxton Court, where it found the family opportunely assembled at the children's dinner. And a goodly assemblage it was! The schoolroom brigade under command of Miss Spicer, the governess, consisted of Jane Coleman (16); Fanny (13); Elizabeth (12); and Bobby, the only boy, a bright-eyed young rascal of seven, who ran the best possible chance of being utterly and irretrievably spoilt by everybody. The drawing-room division, which was in reserve, only lunching, was headed by Materfamilias in person, and was composed of her three eldest daughters who were "out," viz., Laura, Emily Lavinia, and Constance. The age of the first-named young lady was rather a sore subject with portly Mrs. Coleman, whose match-making propensities had been only strengthened by time. Laura was marriageable when Stephen Frankland left for India, and her mother had not yet got her off her hands. Emily was eight years younger than her eldest sister—three intermediate Colemans having died early in life. Constance was the beauty of the family, and was just turned eighteen. I do not exactly know how she made out her claim to this distinction, unless it was that she was the only one of the sisters who had dark hair. Her eyes were not so good as little Fanny's, and her figure not to be compared with Laura's. Her complexion certainly was very beautiful, and this, with good teeth and a haughty air, made her light up pretty well. It was a superstition, however, in Ruxton Court to suppose that she was the *belle* of the county, and was going to marry a Duke as soon as one could be got ready for her. Laura and Emily were, it must be admitted, common-place girls. They had no coloured hair and no coloured faces, and eyes of a hue that you could not exactly make out. But their flowing locks were always braided in the most becoming way; their countenances composed into the most proper expression; and their eyes kept under the most modest control. They had nice hands and feet, and graceful figures. They dressed in good taste, had a fair smattering of accomplishments; knew nothing whatever of the business of life—being taught that it came to an end the moment they had hooked a husband; were neither "fast" nor "serious;" were "district visitors," and looked upon a ball-room as the ante-chamber of paradise; affected the society of Curates, and believed in Officers. In short, they were just the sort of girls that are as common in society as pebbles on the sea-shore.

The clever ones of the family were decidedly Jane and Bobby; but if there was a question about the right of Constance to be considered the beauty-daughter, there was none that poor Jane was the ugly duckling. She was not handsome, certainly. Sometimes her mother would sit gazing intently at her whilst occupied with her drawing or embroidery, or what not, and after long and serious contemplation would exclaim, "Dear, dear, Jane! how very plain you are! What *shall* I do with you?" Whereupon Jane—who knew very well what was passing in the maternal mind—would smile, and reply gaily, "Please don't do anything with me,

mamma darling; let me stay at home and be housekeeper when they have all gone."

It was good to see portly Mrs. Coleman at the children's dinner, cutting up the big leg of mutton, and ladling out the big pie for those happy, hungry mouths. No Vauxhall style of carving hers, I promise you; and she stood up and laboured away at it with a will, till she was fairly out of breath. Mr. Coleman was permitted to preside at the late dinner; but he was no one—inferior to Bobby—at the children's repast.

The first course was just over when Sir George Tremlett's letter arrived.

"Girls, girls!" exclaimed Mrs. Coleman, her jolly face radiant with delight, "guess who's come home!"

The girls were generally addressed as an assemblage, and the elder division always replied in chorus, led by Laura. In this way they tried in vain the names of several of their absent acquaintances, till their mother, who was burning to disclose the good news, kept them no longer in suspense, and declared that it was Stevie.

"Not Stephen Frankland!" gasped Laura, turning deadly pale.

"Captain Stephen Frankland, and no other," was the triumphant reply.

"*The deuce!*" exclaimed Mr. Coleman. "Well I *am* glad! When did he land?"

"He landed three days ago, and is staying at present with some friends in the South; Sir George does not say where. He has left India on sick leave for two years, and will be home on Saturday."

"*The deuce!*" reiterated her husband.

"I alwath wanted to know," said Bobby, "who is that 'deuce' papa talks about so often, and now I know—it's Captain Stephen Frankland!"

"Hold-your tongue, Sir!" cried his mother.

"Coleman,"—(this to her husband: she always called him by his surname, as though he were a boy at school)—"Coleman, if you *will* use such disgraceful language before the children, you must take the consequences. What your father said, Bobby," she continued, turning to the minor offender, "is an exclamation of surprise. Captain Frankland is a brave officer who has been in a great many battles. He went out to India before you were born."

"*The deuce!*" exclaimed Bobby, proud of his new "exclamation of surprise."

Everybody roared; and when silence was restored, Mrs. Coleman declared that that child would drive her mad. "How *dare* you, Sir!" she cried, shaking her head at the delinquent, who sat grinning with delight at the ovation his wit had received; "no pudding for you!" At this dreadful sentence poor Bobby's exultation fell from him like a pin-fore, and he began to blubber; whereupon his mother, who was his abject slave, relented, and filled his plate with damson pie.

"Well; but I've not told you all yet," said Mrs. Coleman, when she had helped round; "Steeve is to have a grand reception at 'The Towers,'

and Sir George wants me to bring the girls over to help him plan the decorations. There is to be a triumphant arch, and all sorts of things to arrange. Will you go, girls?"

Chorus—"Yes, yes, yes! What fun it will be!"

"Will you go this afternoon?"

Chorus—"Yes, yes, yes! we are quite ready."

Solo (Laura)—"May we have the carriage?"

Chorus—"Oh yes, dear mamma; may we have the carriage?"

"You shall have the carriage," Mrs. Coleman replied; "but remember, it will only hold four, and I cannot let you go without me. Laura, do *you* want to go?"

"Yes, please, mamma."

"Very well. Emily's cold is no better, so she must stop at home. Constance can come;—and Jane, you'll be useful I dare say. But, love! I'm forgetting, there won't be room for you."

"Why, mamma, you've only counted three. Yourself, Laura, and Con. I——"

"Hush, my love! I forgot something. Sir George particularly requests the assistance of Miss Lee. So, Grace dear, you must come with us and make the fourth."

This was addressed to a tall, graceful girl, with lovable brown eyes and glorious auburn hair, who sat at the end of the table, and had not spoken a word since Stephen's name was mentioned.

"I tell you what it is," said Bobby, stoutly, "you girls may go in the carriage—carriages are only fit for girls! I shall ride."

"I don't know, Sir," said Mrs. Coleman, severely, "that I shall let you go at all."

"The d——," Bobby just stopped himself in time.

"Now, what were you going to say, you bad, wicked boy?"

"Please, Mar, it was only an exclamation of thurprise; but I didn't say it. I bit the end off just as it was coming out. Mayn't I ride Spot?"

Ride Spot, his pony! of course he might. He might have jumped on his mother's back and ridden *her* over to "The Towers," if he had set his heart upon such a conveyance!

The Coleman girls, selected as decorators, left the room in high spirits. When people lead quiet country lives it is wonderful what a brightening effect the smallest unforeseen event will have. They danced along the passage, and, "Oh, come along and make haste, you dear slow old Grace!" they cried, twining their arms round the waist of the silent girl with the auburn hair, and trying to gallop with her through the hall. They all ran upstairs together to get dressed, and Grace, who was ready the first, went into Jane's room and said, in her quiet way, "Get on your hat, dear, I am not going!"

"Not going! Oh, but you must go. Sir George particularly asked you."

"That is one reason why I decline to join the party. What is Sir George to me, that I should wait upon him because he particularly asks me?"

"But mamma will be vexed."

"No, Fanny, she won't," said Grace, with a queer little smile.

"You darling!" Jane exclaimed, "you're giving up your place to please me."

"I'm giving up my place to please myself. Why should I go pricking my fingers with holly, and making my dress in a mess building triumphant arches, for a man whom I never saw, and whom I rather dislike, from what I have heard of him?"

"Oh, Grace, what have you heard against Captain Frankland?"

"Simply this. That having been away for I don't know how many years in India, the first thing he does on his return is to go and visit some friends instead of coming home to his father! Ah, Janey," she added, in a saddened voice, "if my father were alive, do you think that all the friends in the world would keep me from him for a moment after such an absence? But it is just like a Tremlett! Heaven help us! We're going to be plagued with two of them now instead of one."

"But, Grace, the Captain is not a Tremlett."

"He is half one, just as his precious brother is half a Frankland. I daresay there's not a pin to choose between them."

"Oh no, dear; Laura says——"

"Well, never mind what Laura says. It's no use talking to me about it. I am sure that I shall hate this soldier, Janey, and I won't go—there!"

It was not often that Grace Lee refused to do what she was asked, but when she did, there was no moving her. So Jane took her place in the carriage, which was soon at the door; and to tell truth, good Mrs. Coleman was not sorry for the change. She was a little jealous of Grace. If she had known that the frightened little orphan child, whom she had consented four years ago to adopt and educate with her own girls, was going to turn out so much more beautiful and clever than the best of them, I do not think that Grace would ever have entered the doors of Ruxton Court. It was hard upon a mother, with three marriagable daughters in *esse*, and as many in *posse*, to have a ward who outshone them in every respect.

"But, darling Grace," said Laura, as she settled herself and her flounces in the front seat of the carriage, "what are you going to do whilst we are away?"

"I shall go down to the village and see how Mrs. Kedger is," replied Grace.

"Oh, that horrid old creature! How can you go near her? I believe she is a witch."

"So do I, dear," replied Grace, demurely, "and that is the reason I like her so much. If I can only persuade her to lend me her broomstick,

I will fly after you, and build your triumphant arch out of a cabbage-stalk. That will be capital fun. Won't it, Doggie?"

The last observation was addressed to an apparition which burst out of the stable-yard, and jumped upon Miss Lee, with several yelps of delight; and as she stooped to caress it, the carriage full of laughing girls drove off, accompanied by Bobby, mounted upon a shaggy Shetland pony, as outrider.

The faithful historian is bound to admit, that Doggie was a dreadful cur. His body was too long, his legs were too short, and he carried his tail in a dejected and apologetic manner. His eyes were much too small for his head, and his coat gave you the idea that he had casually swallowed a well-used scrubbing-brush, which had taken root and sprouted through the skin. He was moreover a contemptible coward. I doubt if he dared look a good-sized bluebottle in the face; and as for a gun!—if you put a steel pen up to your shoulder, in sporting fashion, he would run a mile from it.

He was acquired in this wise: The first time Grace Lee had passed through Durmstone, after her arrival at Ruxton Court, she had called with Mrs. Coleman at a cottage, on some charitable errand, and at an adjacent pond saw two boys engaged in the very proper occupation of drowning the blind pup which subsequently was developed into Doggie. She rushed at them, boxed both their ears; and plunging her arm, lace sleeve and all, into the muddy water, rescued the victim; and being made much fun of for her championship of so ill-bred a specimen of dogdom, stuck to him faithfully and reared him as a pet. Gerty Treherne was quite right when she said that this young lady was, "Oh! so queer." Who ever heard of a dog being called "Doggie" as a name? The only redeeming point about the beast was his affection for his mistress; but this was not much to his credit, for it was the easiest thing in the world to love Grace Lee as soon as you knew her, although she was "so queer." See her now, dancing along the meadows, that Doggie may run after her and bark—a very child in heart—full of life, and fun, and kindness! It was all humbug her refusing to go with the girls to Tremlett Towers because she did not want to prick her fingers with holly, and make herself into a mess building the triumphant arch. She would have torn her pretty fingers to the bone to give any one pleasure. In the first place, she saw that Jane was pained at being left out of the party; in the second, people had given her all the credit for decorating the church, and so she wanted the girls to have the opportunity now of distinguishing themselves; and in the third place, she had promised to visit a drunken old hag, and read the Book of Books to her, and would not disappoint the poor conscience-stricken wretch to be appointed designer-in-chief of triumphant arches to all the heroes in the British Army.

So she spent that summer afternoon with her ugly cur and still more repulsive penitent, whilst the Coleman girls designed festoons of laurel and

evergreens for the gay ceremony that was to take place at "The Towers" when Stephen Frankland came home.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. BRANDRON'S LEGACY.

ON the morning that Stephen Frankland sought Mr. Brandron at "The Wells," and found him not, a farm-bailiff, passing through Westborough wood, missed his dog. He called and whistled; but without effect. He turned back towards where he had last seen the animal, and found him in a state of fierce excitement, trying to force his way into the old sawpit. Concluding that a rat or rabbit was in hiding beneath, and fond of a bit of sport, the man encouraged his terrier; and having knocked aside one of the rotting and moss-grown timbers, knelt down and looked into the hole. It seemed to be about eight feet deep. The bottom was covered with water; and crouched up in one corner was something black, which the bailiff could not at first make out—but the dog barked at it furiously. The bailiff quickly stripped off the rest of the covering, and let daylight into the pit. The black object which crouched in the corner was then disclosed, and the man, thinking that it was some one hiding there for an improper purpose, called to him to come out; but there was no movement or reply. The position of the body was precisely that which a beaten child or disabled person would assume to escape further maltreatment. There it lay, crouched in a corner, the limbs all huddled up together, the head bent, face downwards, and the arm thrown over the top, as though to ward off a blow. A second glance showed the bailiff that the blow had not been avoided. He jumped into the pit and tried to raise the body. It was to him the body of a dead man—the face and hands stone cold, no blood in the lips, and a flutter at the heart so faint and fitful, that his kindly but unskilled touch could detect no sign of life. Leaving the wounded man as he had found him, he sprang out of the pit, rushed to the village, and gave the alarm. A gate was lifted from its hinges, and the mangled, helpless lump of human clay, that once was John Everett Brandron, they laid thereon—rough fellows as they were—with no ungentle hands, and carried him slowly to the Inn. The police were sent for, and a surgeon; the latter had arrived about half an hour when Stephen Frankland came in from his fruitless errand.

This practitioner had served in the army, and was a shrewd, quick-witted man; and what he had to say when he drew Stephen aside was soon spoken. He looked him full in the face, and asked where he had been all yesterday? Stephen had not the faintest idea that suspicion had rested upon him, and consequently gave a brief and unstudied account of his movements, which was so obviously truthful, that the surgeon apologized for his abrupt question, and saw at once that Stephen was his natural ally.

"This is no common robber's work," he said; "and your business and mine is, first of all, to try our best to save the poor gentleman's life, and next to have a Magistrate at hand ready to hear anything he may have to say, if he should ever regain consciousness. So, do you take my gig, drive as hard as the mare will carry you to 'The Wells,' and ask any one to direct you to Mr. Grove, the surgeon. See his son—his son, mind, not the old man; tell him to pack up everything necessary for raising a fracture of the skull, and bring him back here. On your way out, tell one of those useless, gaping idiots in blue coats to go for the nearest Justice of the Peace, and bid the others search about near where the body was found for the weapon that has been used, and foot tracks, before half the village overrun the place and obliterate all traces. Now, pray start at once, without questioning. Question afterwards, when there is nothing else to do."

Stephen was not a man to disobey orders from one who had a right to give them; and although still half dizzy with astonishment, and burning with anxiety to ask a score of things concerning the finding of the body—for the bare fact that it had been found in the old sawpit was all he knew as yet—he lost not a moment in carrying out Mr. Hillyard's instructions, and returned with young Mr. Grove and the instruments some half hour sooner than expected. He did not spare the flea-bitten grey, and that thorough-bred screw had carried him along bravely.

Meanwhile, Brandron lay without sense or motion on the bed where they had placed him. His skull was beaten in; his right arm was broken as by a heavy blow from a club or bludgeon; he had bled profusely from his wounds, and had now been twenty-four hours without food. The operation of trepanning was performed as it were upon a corpse, and about midnight—restoratives having been administered every half hour—he slowly opened his eyes, and cast a terrified glance at those who stood around. It fell—last of all—on Stephen Frankland, who sat close to the head of the couch; changed to a vague stare; rested upon him for a while; and then flashed into a look of intelligence and relief; upon which the heavy eyelids fell for another long hour, when the wounded man stretched forth his sound arm and felt about towards the place where Stephen had been sitting.

The surgeons—who had never both left the room—saw the movement, and divined its motive. "Go to him—softly now!" they whispered to Stephen, who was standing by the window gazing out into the summer night, "he wants you." They had noticed the change of his expression when his eyes fell on the young soldier, and knew that consciousness was now returning. Stephen sprang lightly to the bed-side and took Brandron's hand. Instantly his eyes opened, with the old look of confidence upon them; his grasp tightened on Stephen's strong brown palm, and never released it till soul and clay had parted. Restoratives were again administered, and his lips soon began to move as though

he were speaking. Stephen bent down his ear very close, to try and catch the sound; but the utterance was disjointed and thick. All he could make out was the word "deceived," repeated very often.

Shortly after daybreak the sounds became more articulate, although the words frequently began and ended in a moan. "Deceived!" he murmured again and again—"deceived after twenty years! We were suckled at the same breast, but thank God no blood of mine moves in your veins. Twenty years! Did I not tell you how it would end? Did I not warn you that the truth could not be hid—that it would grow, and grow, and grow, till it burst through the network of lies and fraud, and plotting, in which you thought to imprison it, and would hunt you like a felon at the last? And it is so! Twenty years! And then the weakest of your dupes—the least trusted of them all—conscience-smitten, gives the clue which brings me here to ask—to demand, justice! I say that justice shall be done—mark me! *shall*. Deny it, obstruct it for another month, and neither your title nor your wealth shall save you from the hulks. You will do justice! Will you swear it? Well, I will not be ungenerous and say that you cannot help it now; but I cannot trust you. No, no, no! No trust between us. No! Twenty years, and all the time deceived—deceived. No trust! Never, never any more—never—never!" And then the voice of the sufferer fell, and died away into a low incessant moaning that made Stephen's heart bleed to hear.

Towards morning a great change came over Brandron. Unassisted, he turned half round on the bed towards Stephen, and looked about him with a perfectly calm expression, and said firmly, "Lift me up." They did so slightly, and raised his wounded head with more pillows. "Now some wine?" The surgeons filled a glass with a drug, the powerful odour of which I have learned to associate with death, and gave it to him at his lips. Then again he spoke with increased firmness and said, "I wish to be alone with Captain Frankland. I wish no one to remain within hearing."

Mr. Hillyard whispered a word or two in Stephen's ear, and then left the room, accompanied by the younger surgeon. Stephen then knelt on the floor beside the bed, so that his lips should be on a level with the sufferer's ear, and said—

"Can you hear what I say?"

"Yes."

"Do you wish to speak respecting the mur— respecting what has happened to you?"

"Yes; listen."

"One moment. You may not have strength to say what you wish twice over. A Magistrate is expected to be here very shortly. Will you wait till he comes?"

"No, no, no; I will see no Magistrate," was the reply.

"Then the ruffian who has assailed you may escape."

"Let him, for her sake, for her dear mother's sake; let him," said Brandron eagerly. "I will have no pursuit, no prosecution, no exposure, for her sake."

"Do you think it right to obstruct the course of justice?"

"Right or wrong, I will do so. I know that I have little time to spare, and speaking pains me. Pray let this pass. I tell you plainly, Stephen Frankland, that you shall not get one word out of me to compromise that man—not for his sake though. Now, listen. I have met the person whom I expected."

"And have fallen by his hand?"

"I do not say so," replied Brandron quickly. "Mark me well, and remember, through all that follows, I do not say so—I accuse no one. I find I cannot speak to you as I thought I could. Why trouble the mind of a dying man with thoughts of vengeance? Vengeance is not mine."

"But Justice is," said Stephen; "and this fearful crime——"

"Seems to me," Brandron interrupted, "as the work of Providence. I am as a crushed worm, writhing out my last agony; but I think I see the finger of God in this. I could not have done all that should be done. I could not have made, and seen her, happy. Twenty years ago it might have been; but *now*—No, no! She would mistrust me to the end. Stephen Frankland, you are young and honest; brave and tender-hearted. You will take my place, will you not, and do what I should have done?"

"I will do anything and everything for you; only tell me of whom do you speak?"

"Of the only woman I ever loved, and of her child; but before I say another word, swear to me, as you hope for mercy when you are as I am, that you will not divulge one word of what I say, neither will you let it be known that I have said anything, or use what I do say, directly or indirectly, for any other purpose than that for which it is said. Why do you not reply? Why this hesitation?"

"Because," Stephen replied, "I hope you will think better of this; because—let me be candid with you—I think you are not well enough to be able to consider the full effect of what you do. You may repent of having confided in me. Wait a few days, until you are calmer and stronger, and in the mean time——"

"In a few days, Stephen Frankland, I shall be a dead man," said Brandron, in a solemn tone. "Nay, it's no use shaking your head and trying to smile. Did I not tell you that I had a presentiment of what would happen? And do you think the work has been left incomplete? I am quite calm, quite sensible, now. I see by the lighting up of your honest face that you think this a good sign. You are mistaken; it is the calm which precedes the storm—the last flare of the lamp before it is extinguished. Let us talk of hours, my boy, not days. In a few hours I shall be delirious; even now I fancy that things which should not move are

moving all about me; and that faces that no one on earth can see are watching me from every darkened corner. In a few hours more I shall be silent for ever; therefore, hear me whilst you can. I have not been delirious *yet*, Stephen?"—he added quickly, as though a thought had suddenly struck him.

"You have been wandering a little—not much."

"But have I said anything—anything that you could understand?"

"You have been speaking; and I tell you frankly that I paid great attention to your words, disjointed though they were."

Brandron groaned aloud—not with bodily pain.

"Did I mention names?"

"No."

"Thank God! Did I speak of the—— of what had happened to me?"

"You did."

"Oh, Frankland, tell me what I said—all—all—as you are a true man?"

"I will; your words were often repeated, and your sentences confused. It will be best for me to tell you, not what you said, but what I gathered from it."

"Yes, yes; pray go on."

"I gathered that you had been deceived by some one for twenty years; that there was a secret between you which was in part shared by another; that this person lately divulged the truth, and I conclude that it is the discovery of this that has brought you from India."

"You are right, so far—go on."

"I gather also," Stephen continued, "that you met this man who had deceived you, here, in Westborough. That he is a person of rank and position, and your foster-brother."

A deadly pallor spread over Brandron's face, and again he moaned aloud.

"And finally, that the act of justice which you have undertaken to perform was intended to redress an injury which this man has done to one whom you loved long ago."

"Did others hear all this?"

"I cannot say. Mr. Hillyard and his young assistant were within ear-shot the whole time you were speaking, and the landlady a part; but I do not think that they paid much attention to what you said, treating it as mere wandering talk. They had not the cause for listening that I had."

"You are sure that I mentioned no names?"

"Quite sure."

"And you have told me all that I have divulged and you suspect?"

"I suspect—in short, I am convinced—that the man who met you here by appointment is the villain who has tried to murder you. I know nothing further. I would to Heaven I did! It is monstrous that such a crime should go unpunished. Your forbearance towards him is wonderful; but, mark my words, the police are on his track, and he will be discovered sooner or later."

"If they ever discover him—and I pray God, Stephen Frankland, they never may," said Brandron solemnly—"remember what I said just now. I make no accusation against him. If you will obey my last request, you will not attempt to find out who and what he is; but, mark me, not one word shall pass my lips until you have sworn—no, I will not ask you to swear—until you have promised as a gentleman, a soldier, and a friend, to use the knowledge you have already gained, and that which I shall impart presently, for no other purpose than the one—to carry out one act of justice."

"Let me tell you one thing more," said Stephen, "before you proceed any further. By sealing my lips, you by no means prevent detection by others. In inquiring for you, on my return from Kernden, I made it known that you had met some one—indeed, you were seen to leave this house with him. He spoke to some boys in the village, and they will be able to describe and identify him." Stephen expected that this news would have a great effect upon Brandron, and he communicated it slowly, and with caution. Brandron only smiled.

"I am quite content," he said, "to take your promise of secrecy, and leave all else to Providence. But this I do authorize," he continued after a pause, a flash of anger lighting up his eyes, "if—if this man of whom we have been speaking refuse to do justice, or delays it, let my blood be upon his head—let the dog swing—let the gallows have its own! But no shame, no exposure, upon her; no punishment upon him, if he will do justice. Promise me that, promise—" But the excitement caused by the revival of old memories, and the exertion of speaking, proved too much for the wounded man, and he sank back upon the pillow, and soon began to moan and wander as before. "Yes," he murmured, "you will do justice at last. Why did you ever delay it? I told you that the secret never could be hid. Twenty years! Poor child! poor little child! You told me she was dead, and that was true. What? You will do it to keep the old blood pure and unstained! Is a felon's blood pure and unstained? Away with such cursed pride! Here, down in that wood, we can talk unobserved. Come, follow me. Dead! yes, dead years ago—but justice. Ah! cruel, treacherous to the end! Where is Frankland—where, where? Do not leave me again; I am very weak—very, very weak; and my brain's on fire. Give me more of that drink?"

"I do not know that I may," said Stephen, bending over him. "Let me call Hillyard?"

"No, no! I pray you do not leave me! Give me the drink!" he added, almost fiercely: "what does it matter if it does make life burn away the quicker? It gives me—strength, to—speak, and speak I must, and will."

The two surgeons entered the room as he spoke, and a meaning look passed between them as they saw the change that had come over his expression.

"Oh, yes," said Hillyard, in reply to Stephen's question, "you may

give him anything and everything he fancies, *now*. Mr. Somers, the Magistrate, has come, and also the chief constable of the county. Will he see them?"

The words were spoken almost in a whisper, but Brandron heard them, and replied for himself. "I will see no one," he said, slowly and with much firmness. "I thank you all for what you have done for me, but I wish to be left alone with Captain Frankland—quite alone. Please to give me some more of that drink, which strengthens me, and then leave me with my friend?"

They did as he desired, and quitted the room.

"Are they gone—all gone?" he asked.

Stephen assured him that they had.

"And yet," Brandron continued, gazing fixedly towards the foot of the bed, "I see her sitting there as plainly as on that fatal night, with her dear eyes full of tears, and her bonnie young cheeks all ploughed and sunken with sorrow. You need not tell me it is a delusion. I *know* it is—and more, a warning. Yes, justice shall be done. You will take— But, stop; this must be done in proper form. Please call in Mr. Hillyard once more. Do not leave me—call."

Stephen called, and in a moment a quick step was heard on the stair, and the surgeon in the room, eagerly inquiring what had happened.

"I only want you to witness what I say. I believe that the law allows a dying man to make a gift without going through the formality of a deed or will. I am a dying man, Mr. Hillyard."

The surgeon made no reply, but turned his face aside.

"I therefore call you to witness that I give Captain Frankland my desk, and all that it contains, together with any papers of mine that may be found here. Also, I give him all the property belonging to me now on its way from India. Let my desk and papers be brought up to me now, that I may formally hand over the bills of lading relating to those goods. There is nothing of any value," he added, as Hillyard left the room; "but I will have no strangers prying into my affairs."

The desk and papers, which Stephen had sealed up, were brought, and formally given to him by Brandron. He then bade them bring his pocket-book, which he said would be found in the breast-pocket of the coat he had worn. They searched, but could not find it; and in a few minutes he seemed to have forgotten his request, and again begged to be left alone with Frankland.

"Is it evening yet?" he asked, when the door had closed upon the surgeon. "It is very dark!"

A glorious summer sun, shining in a blue, cloudless sky, was streaming upon the darkened window, upon the honeysuckle that clustered round it, upon the birds that were singing in the golden laburnum, and the flowers that were opening in the garden below—streaming upon the ripening harvest, upon meadow, stream, and fen, striking the teeming

earth as it were with a magic wand, and bidding her increase come forth and flourish—streaming upon cattle standing knee-deep in babbling brooks; flickering through thickets, and marking the trees with chequered light and shade, varying ceaselessly, as the boughs waved slowly in the lazy summer breeze—blazing upon weary travellers painfully plodding along the dusty road; upon sturdy vagrants fast asleep, stretched at full length, face downwards, upon its grassy margin; upon timid little leverets, that stole out of their nest in the tangled hedgerow to bask in its enlivening rays. It shone upon snakes and creeping things that writhed out of darksome places to greet it; upon man in his strength, and woman in her beauty; and upon a thousand insect forms, beautiful and loathsome, that had no life in the morning, and would be dead before the eve. Stephen Frankland gently released his hand from Brandron's grasp, and having partly unclosed the shutter which darkened the chamber of death, the sunlight surged in like a wave, and filled it.

"Do not leave me again!" Brandron said when he had resumed his seat; "I cannot bear being left here helpless and alone, amongst all these strange people. As long as I hold your hand I know that you are not one of them, but when I loose it I seem to be sinking back into an ocean full of horrors. Why is it so very dark?"

"I am afraid the light has dazzled you; shall I draw the curtain?"

"I think not. There is something white over there; is that the light?"

"Oh, yes. Is it too bright for you?"

"No, not too bright; only it flows over her like a veil, and hides her features. I am not afraid that he will come whilst she sits there, Frankland; but promise me, that if I should begin to say things that you cannot understand—not to you, I mean to some one else—you will clear the room, and let no one hear."

Stephen gave the required pledge, to quiet, as he hoped, the wounded man in his approaching delirium. He did not know then of that marvellous duality of the human mind which creates in it two thoughts—the one rational, and the other irrational—upon the same subject. Brandron's insane thought was, that a female figure was seated at the foot of his bed, and that other phantoms might appear, when she departed, to whom he would say something; and his sane thought was, that this something, whatever it might be, should not be overheard by the surgeons, the landlady, and other *real* persons, whom he knew would probably be in the chamber from time to time.

Through all he said his manner was perfectly calm and collected until the very last, and he seemed to be aware that his delusions *were* delusions, and by an effort of will restrained himself in a great measure from giving way to them.

"Tell me," he said, "what we were speaking of before I sent for my desk and papers?"

"You were asking me," Stephen replied, "to promise that I would compel the performance of some act of justice, when you are—— in case you become unable to do so yourself; and I was urging——"

"Yes, I know. You want me to give information as to who struck me down in the wood, and you have had your answer. I can remember that. Did you notice the look she gave me when I asked the doctor if I was not dying? But I forgot. You see only the light as it streams through the window; you do not see her sitting in the midst of it, waiting for me with that dear, sad, patient smile. Was it not enough for him that she should be happy—that she should lead the life that to her was the pleasantest and best? Why should he step in with his cursed pride—his vain ambition, and blight her in her prime? Oh, Frankland, Frankland, for God's sake, help me to keep my mind upon the one point! Stop me when I begin to wander thus. Can it be that it is too late? Everything seems so dark, and the events of yesterday and those of twenty years ago are tangled up together so, that I am lost amongst them."

"Will not these letters help to disclose what you wish me to know?" Stephen inquired. "I found them scattered over the table in your sitting room, and sealed them up thus."

"That was good—that was kind; I see you will act faithfully, and she——Look, look, how she is smiling upon you!"

"You are mistaken; no one is there," said Stephen; "think only of the letters"—and he opened the packet and spread out its contents on the coverlet, as well as he could, with one hand; "try and fix your attention on these. Am I to read them?"

"Yes; but not now. Precious moments are wasting fast. Put them away, and read them all hereafter."

Stephen Frankland quickly gathered them together, and thrust them into the desk; but, as he did so, could not help remarking that one was folded in a very rough and peculiar manner, and that the broken seal bore an impression of the top of a thimble. Had the stately head-butler from Tremlett Towers been present, he would have recognized in that epistle a very near relation of the one which had arrived for his master on the day when he left home "on business."

"Relying on my own powers," Brandon continued, "and in a moment of foolish confidence, I trusted him—you know of whom I speak—and destroyed many papers, which are unimportant for my own guidance, but which would be valuable for yours. One that would have told you all, I burnt the moment before I saw him approaching the Inn. No, no," he cried suddenly, turning a quick glance towards the light, "not that—oh, no! *That* is safe with the others in the packet! Safe? Oh, Heavens! Is this real? or a delusion? I could not have told him where it was, and yet his manner was so plausible, and he so solemnly vowed to do what I should direct, that I——. Oh, God, help us, if I have told him where that packet is to be found!"

"If you will tell me where it is," said Stephen, "I will take care that no improper use is made of it. If you will tell me the name of the person who is interested in obtaining it, I will do my best to get it from him, act upon its contents as you may desire, or destroy it unread."

Frankland's anxiety and suspense were now becoming almost unbearable. For hours a secret, which he knew must be a terrible one, had been trembling upon the lips of his friend, and was still unrevealed. The shadow of death was falling rapidly upon him, darkening his intellect, and threatening to put the seal of the grave upon the revelation which he was struggling in vain to make. His voice had been very weak, and his words—which followed each other slowly—were pronounced with an effort that became greater and more painful as he proceeded. The change too which Mr. Hillyard had noticed in his features had deepened, and was plain enough now to the unskilled but sorrowing eyes of Stephen Frankland. Again and again did he repeat his questions respecting the important packet. Brandron heeded him not, but addressed himself exclusively to the figure which he supposed to be seated in the sunlight, praying her to forgive him for some neglect that he had been guilty of, and imploring her to watch over the papers, as *he*—the unknown author of her wrongs—would not dare to lay a hand upon them if she were by. The shock of the *real* impression that he had revealed their hiding-place, so suddenly brought upon his mind, had over-balanced his weakened and failing faculties, and made it wander more than ever. His head fell back heavily upon his pillow, his eyes closed, and he babbled vaguely about this hidden packet. "Come, come," he murmured, "follow me quickly, lest he get there first. Now, then—no, not there, woman! Not in the cabinet; it is opened every day, and some one might find them. We must get them away out of this cursed house altogether; but you are watched, and so am I, and we must find a place of safety for them till we are free. See! thrust them in here, for the present at any rate, till we can find a better place."

Stephen saw in a moment what this meant. Brandron had begun by imagining that he was seeking the concealed papers; but by a very natural process his memory flashed back to the moment in which he had hidden them. Stephen resolved to fix it there.

"Tell me," he said, "who it is who holds the packet, and was about to place it in the cabinet when you prevented her?"

"Sarah Alston—no! not Alston; she was married then. Sarah—Sarah," he repeated the name, trying in vain to recollect some other,—"Sarah—Sarah—Alston. Yes, I know. You were faithless after all, and repented after all. Twenty years! until——"

"When you prevented Sarah Alston from placing the papers in the cabinet," Stephen interrupted, seeing that his mind was wandering from the point, "where did you tell her to thrust them?"

"There was a loose board in the wainscoting. We dropped them

into a hole behind it; and I fastened it up that night as well as I could when the house was quiet."

"What house?" asked Frankland, quickly.

"The house he took her to when she fled. The house where the child was born."

"Do you mean where the child's father took her?"

"Yes."

"Was he her husband!"

Brandron started from the state of trance in which he had answered the previous questions, and with flashing eyes cried—

"Who dares deny it? Husband! Ay, that he was, in the sight of God, and according to the strictest laws of man. The proofs are there—there, I tell you!"

"Tell me his name, and that of his wife's father, at once," said Frankland, "for I think I can guess——"

"Hush! guess nothing. The papers will tell you all. You must get them. Promise me you will get them?"

"I do. Now tell me exactly where they are?"

"Tap the skirting-board till it sounds hollow, and then take out the panel. They are within reach of your right arm behind."

"And the room in which this panel is—where is that?"

"Over the armoury at the end of the corridor that runs along the far side of the hall as you mount the staircase. Not the chamber to the right—the one straight on. You cannot mistake it. It is hung with tapestry to within about four feet of the ground. The wainscoting is dark oak; so is the cabinet. There is an old-fashioned mirror with a suit of armour on each side of it, facing the window. I see it now! She sat by that window just as she is sitting there, waiting for his return; and I knew——"

"You must tell me the name of the house in which this room is, and in what part of England it is to be found?"

—— "that he would never come back again to brighten your dear eyes," Brandron continued, not heeding him, and speaking again towards where the sunlight streamed through the casement; "never, never; but justice shall be done at last."

"Not unless the papers are found," said Stephen, trying to turn his thoughts back into the old channel; "and if this person to whom you think that you have confided their whereabouts should get possession of them——"

"He must not!" cried Brandron, eagerly. "You must discover and protect them. You must go and get them, but not until—— Not now—not for a little while longer."

"I will; I promise you on my word, as a soldier and a man, that I will; only tell me where are they? I mean where——?"

"Oh, will you not hear?" the sufferer replied in an impatient tone.

"In the tapestry chamber over the armoury, close to the floor—there, there!" and with a great effort he raised himself into a sitting posture on the bed, and releasing Frankland's hand, which he had held tightly clasped all the time, pointed into a corner of the room between the fireplace and the door. At this moment a cloud passed over the sun, and the light which had blazed in through the window faded away. Brandon turned his eyes and watched it, with a strange sweet smile upon his lips, as the rays were quenched. Then, as the room gradually darkened, he sank slowly backwards into Stephen's arms.

"I see the very spot," he said, "and I shall know the room amongst a thousand. Only one word more. The name of the house is——

"MANGERTON CHASE!"

"In this county?"

Brandon's eyes closed again; his head fell heavily on Stephen's shoulder just as the last beam of sunlight vanished. "She has gone," he murmured; "let me rest."

"In a moment you shall. These papers are hidden behind the paneling in the room over the armoury at Mangerton Chase, and Mangerton Chase is——. Where? pray speak? Say what town or county. How else shall I ever find it? Will any of these letters tell me?"

He repeated these questions several times, but received no reply. Gently he relaxed his support, and let Brandon sink back upon his pillows.

He had remained thus motionless and speechless, with the smile I have mentioned still upon his lips, and breathing softly, for some ten minutes, when some one knocked at the door. Stephen rose, and having opened it, found the landlady outside with a tray full of good things which she had brought for his dinner.

"Now, do 'e, Sir, take something! You've had no breakfast, and no supper last night. I've roasted a nice chicken, and got some prime cider for you. Now, do 'e let me lay it out? The look of it will make you hungry."

Stephen had not thought about being hungry, or, indeed, of anything else than his friend; but the savoury odours which steamed up as the good woman raised the cover of her dish reminded him that he had not tasted food for nearly twelve hours. He therefore let his hostess into the room.

"And how is the poor gentleman, now?" she asked, as she deposited her tray on the table. "Sleeping, I do declare! as quietly as a child. Well; that is good! But maybe we might wake him with the clatter of the things. Let me take 'em down again, Sir; and you have your dinner in the parlour? Mr. Hillyard is coming up, and will watch in your place."

"She's quite right," said the surgeon in a whisper. "You will be ill if you do not take some rest and refreshment. Go down, and I will

relieve you. This sleep is a very good sign, and I hope it may last for many hours; but I give you my word that I will call you the moment that he begins to wake."

So Stephen went down, and made short work of the chicken, for he was half famished, as he found as soon as the excitement which had hitherto kept him up abated. Then, his hunger appeased, he felt tired and heavy-eyed, and having thrown himself back on the sofa, in two minutes was fast asleep.

He started awake after having slept, as he supposed, about half an hour, and found that it was night. The next moment he was springing up the stairs that led to Brandron's room, and was about to enter, when the landlady came out and stopped him.

"Don't 'e go in just now, Sir," she said, with her apron to her eyes; "they've not done yet!"

"In Heaven's name! done what?"

"Haven't Master Hillyard told 'e then?" she asked, in a tone of surprise.

"No; but do not speak so loud. Is he awake yet?"

"You may speak as loud as you please now; you'd not disturb him," said the woman sorrowfully.

"Good God, he is dead!"

"Ay, Sir, two hours ago; but don't take on like that. He went off in his sleep without a groan, and he lies there now with a smile upon his poor, cold lips."

CHAP. IX.

DOWN AMONGST THE BACK STREETS.

LITTLE Union Street, Old Kent Road, S., is a locality with which most of my readers will probably be unacquainted. It is a quiet, grimy, low-spirited, little, old-fashioned street, which seems as though it had quite lost itself in a labyrinth of noisy, bustling thoroughfares, and had slunk away into a corner afraid to come out and struggle with the press. In ten minutes you may walk from it into the busiest parts of Southwark—may bargain for tens of thousands with hop-merchants in the Borough, with tanners at Bermondsey, with wharfingers in Tooley Street, with warehousemen, in every line of business, all around. You may have a fish-dinner at Billingsgate—see a hanging at Horsemonger Lane Gaol—have your head broken by a drunken costermonger in the New Cut—get it plastered up at St. Thomas's Hospital—meet a friend from Norwood, Paris, Grand Cairo, Timbuctoo (where you will) at the London Bridge Railway Station—see a melodrama at the Victoria Theatre—purchase an outfit for Australia, and take your passage to Tasmania, Nova Zembla, or Herne Bay, without going beyond a sixpenny cab fare from Little Union Street. But Little Union Street, instead of assuming a brisk and independent air, and pricking up

its ears—so to speak—at the sound of the rattle and hum of mercantile life that surrounded it, as much as to say, “I’m ready for you as soon as ever you like to step my way,” suffered itself to be scared by the prevailing activity, and gradually subsided into the dejected state in which it may now be found. The fact was, it had seen better days. It once was a thoroughfare; for some houses in a street that crossed its end at right angles were burnt down a very long time ago; and the ground got—somehow or other—into Chancery in 1785, and, as a matter of course, remained unbuilt upon (a playground and vent for traffic through Little Union Street) until—somehow or other—it got out again, a few years ago, when a huge Brewery, which turned its back contemptuously upon the little street and made it into a *cul de sac*, was erected with inconceivable rapidity upon the vacant land.

There were no shops in Little Union Street when this was done. The houses (fifty-six in all) were dwelling-houses, two storeys high, with a railing, which enclosed a little patch of black dirt—once a grass-plot—in front of each; but the tide of trade which swayed down Ruby Row—the thoroughfare which traversed the end opposite to the Brewery, oozed round the corner, and caused shops to be built upon the patches of dirt aforesaid, belonging to three houses on the one side, and two upon the other. The pawnbroker in Ruby Row had his private door round in Little Union Street; next to that was Mr. Stubbs, the greengrocer; and next to him Mr. Sykes, the baker. Opposite, was a shop which broke out about every three months into a new business. First of all it was opened by a milliner; then by a tobacconist; then, by a widow with two daughters, in the worsted-work and fancy stationery line; then it was “To Let,” for a space; and one fine morning, just before our first visit is paid, a boy came out, took down the shutters, and lo! Mr. Cornelius Brufter, Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons, stood behind an imposing row of gallipots, with a choice stock of tooth-brushes and perfumery, sternly resolved to cup, blister, and bleed, to draw the teeth of all comers, to prepare prescriptions with accuracy, and to give advice upon all the ills that flesh is heir to, gratis, every Tuesday and Friday, from nine o’clock till two! (With his next-door neighbour we are likely to become very well acquainted.) And further on, at the corner, resided old Chincks, the broker, who appeared to drive a lucrative trade by insulting every customer who entered his dirty shop.

The intermediate establishment was the humblest one of all, and the oldest; and to tell truth, the neighbourhood was rather ashamed of it. It was kept by one Mrs. Wantley, who in the days of her youth had been lady’s-maid in a nobleman’s family, in which she had shown her wisdom by saving money, and her folly by marrying the under-butler. Her husband had not a frugal mind, but highly estimated frugality in others—particularly in his wife. He borrowed two hundred pounds, and set up with her as an hotel-keeper. Being of a convivial and easy disposition, he left his busi-

ness to take care of itself, whilst he smoked his pipe in the bar-parlour; lost all he had in the world; went through the Insolvent Court; had a large family; took to drinking, whilst his wife took lodgers in Little Union Street; got *delirium tremens*, and died—leaving a silver watch, four masonic orders, a gold-headed cane, an opera glass, and fourteen shillings and ninepence, to pay sixty pounds worth of debts and provide for his widow and family of two sons and five daughters.

A more patient, hard-working woman, and a kinder mother, than poor Mrs. Wantley, never lived; but she sadly lacked the strength of mind and tact requisite for keeping straight a family with the reckless and jovial Sam Wantley's blood in their veins. Flora, their eldest-born, was far too fine a lady to do anything for her living; and Bob, her brother, got early in life into bad company, and became at the age of sixteen as fully-developed a scamp and irreclaimable a "ne'er-do-well" as ever was known to the police. He has now nearly completed a sentence of two years' imprisonment with hard labour in Maidstone Gaol for a burglary, committed with six others, in a jeweller's shop at Dover. Helen, the second girl, was the best of the bunch. She was a good, pretty girl, and earned a guinea a week in the ballet at one of the minor theatres. Next to her, in age and merit, was Charley, a youth of thirteen, who was also a bread winner, holding the high and responsible office of clerk to three briefless barristers in the Temple, at the salary of six-and-sixpence a week—earned, as far as anybody could see, by opening the door to his master's visitors, when not better engaged in playing marbles with the boys of the next court, sliding down the bannisters, and having things thrown at him for disobedience of orders.

The younger children were mere pocket-handkerchiefless brats, whose mission on earth seemed to be to get in the way and have their ears boxed by their eldest sister.

It was hard work to satisfy all these hungry mouths out of the profits of the little shop, though the net which it spread for custom was a wide one. What was Mrs. Wantley "by trade?" She was a fruiterer—for there was a heap of venerable apples for sale in one corner of the window. She was a tobacconist—for a long sized box, divided into compartments, and containing rolls of brown vegetable matter variously designated as "Prime Havannahs 2d. each," "Pickwicks, seven for 6d.," and "Full-flavoured Cubas 1d.," was placed prominently on the counter. She was a haberdasher—for she sold tapes and thread. She was a stationer—for you might buy as much as two quires of paper without quite exhausting her stock. She was a confectioner—as proved by the possession of four pickle-bottles, more or less full of Bonaparte's ribs, almond rock, bull's eyes, and some to me unknown condiment, made into the semblance of miniature barbers' poles, and apparently composed of pumice-stone painted white and red. She was a commission-agent in the coal line. She kept a "Registry Office for respectable Servants;" a toy-shop for the supply

of farthing battledors and whiptops to the juveniles of Little Union Street. She sold pepper, snuff, and bird-seed. She was a retailer of patent black-lead; of shilling Bibles and Prayer-books; of penny balls of string; bottles of ink; boxes of wafers; portraits of the Red Rover, the Black Knight, Timour the Tartar, and other celebrities, as they appeared, armed to the teeth, defying mankind with a limb in all four corners of the paper. It is only in poor, old-fashioned shops like Mrs. Wantley's, and in poor old-fashioned neighbourhoods like Little Union Street, that I see these works of art now-a-days—and there they are sadly fly-blown and dingy, and are, I am afraid, unsaleable. Has the youth of the present day lost the taste for gorgeous illustrations which distinguished some of its fathers? Does it cut out the space printed as the petticoat of the Red Rover, paste a bit of blue silk riband behind, and dot it all over with little gold spangles at three halfpence a dozen? Does it invest in gorgeous foil for the armour of its favourite knights? Does it sigh for a silver scimitar, valued at the unrealizable sum of sixpence, to place in the doughty hand of the Conqueror of Bajazet? Have you forgotten, oh reader! the pride with which you exhibited your first work in this style, varnished all over with that pennyworth of gum-arabic the better to display its brilliant colouring? I have not. Where is that production now? Where are our first baby socks, our school letters, the little presents that we made in our childhood, our first scrap of poetry? They will all turn up, perhaps, some day, when the dear preserver of the relics will not behold in this world the emotions which their discovery produces—when we shall wish—oh, how heartily!—many a word unsaid, many an act undone, and mourn for many, *many* a neglect, in presence of those worn and faded evidences of a love which endured to the end.

But I have not told you yet what was the main business carried on by good Mrs. Wantley in her shop in Little Union Street. She was everything I have mentioned, and something more. She was a newsvendor. You might buy six different daily newspapers from her every morning, and read (say) twenty leading articles, for sixpence! You might lay out half-a-crown with her every week in penny periodicals inculcating all degrees of virtue and vice, through the medium of romances numerous enough to stock an old-fashioned circulating library. You might learn from the *British Pump* how the good little boy who always drank water lived to be made Lord Mayor, whilst the naughty little boy who had a proclivity for beer was—as a natural sequence—transported for life; and will be taught in the chaste pages of *Snarler's Miscellany* that the ordinary avocation of an English nobleman is to go about consorting with resurrection-men, abducting milliners' apprentices, poisoning their own fathers, intriguing with their friend's wife (who, by the way, if she should happen to be a peeress, is always, after the custom of her class, deep in the power of her lady's maid), and oppressing in every conceivable manner the "sons of toil," for whose delectation these trustworthy pictures of aristocratic life are

drawn. Interesting, brave young gentlemen, who don't exactly know who they are; fascinating, virtuous young ladies in high life, with hard-hearted parents and guardians. Or, *vice versa*, brave young gentlemen in high life, with hard-hearted parents and guardians, and virtuous young ladies who don't exactly know who they are. And where do you keep the aristocratic, but naughty lady, and the noble, but rascally gentleman, of riper years, who are the evil geniuses of the virtuous heroine and the brave hero, respectively. In here? Ah, I see! No; you need not trouble yourselves to tell me what *these* are, I know them so very well. They are the groping old lawyers, money-lenders, herbalists, poisoners, sextons, receivers of stolen goods—misers all—who know where the missing deeds, and wills, and marriage-certificates are. And next to them, in there, I see the heavy-handed physical-force ruffians who “do” the abductions, murders, burglaries, and the rest of it. Here, also, are old friends—the faithful, but eccentric, servants of either sex; and there, the deformed boys and workhouse drudges who overhear the secret just in the nick of time. Well, put out the types as you will, fit them together, and there is your New and Original Romance!

Dinner is over, and I draw my chair round by the fire-side. My youngest child climbs on my knee, and the old cry, “Please, Pop, a story?” is heard. “What story will you have, my pet?” “Please, Pop, Cinderella.” “But I told you Cinderella last night, and the night before, and a great many nights before that; would you not like something new?”

“Will it be just like Cinderella?”

“No; quite different.”

“Then, please, Pop, tell me Cinderella again?”

Is not my child a foolish little thing, oh, discerning public! to like the same tale repeated every day?

And now, gentlemen illustrators of these popular works, for your “case.” Here are the heroes—you can tell them by their open brows and the fit of their trousers. Here are the heroines, with fair hair and simple drapery. Here is the bad man breathing vice through his moustaches; and here the naughty lady with her evil ways stamped in water curls on either side of her face. Here is the old miser in his ragged dressing-gown, elf locks and pimply chin; and there the ruffian in laced boots, wide-awake, and a curling nose. Don't try and persuade me that he is the honest peasant. The honest peasant may have laced boots and a wide-awake; but never a curling nose! Down there, in those little holes, are the tables, chairs, couches, clocks, mantelpiece ornaments—all massive, clear and costly, ready to be “composed” into the study of my lord, the boudoir of my lady, or the garret of the old miser, just as regularly as my long-suffering printer will pick out the letters c—o—m—p—o—s—e—d from their various corners, and make them into that word.

“And now, Pop, show me some pictures?” says my little child.

"What pictures, dearie?"

"Please, the beast-book."

"But you saw the beast-book this morning."

"Please, Pop, I want to see it again."

Dear! dear! dear! What dolts these children are! Why cannot they acquire a taste for novelty?

I think there be grown-up men and women as fond of repetitions as my little prattler, or Mrs. Wantley would not have so many penny prints on hand.

The good woman made a few shillings a week by the sale of this class of literature; but her main profit was not from thence. She had a lodger. Her parlours were let to a Mr. Sampson Lager, a gentleman of irregular habits and varying appearance. Sometimes he was a slim gentleman, closely buttoned up in a frock coat. Sometimes he was a stout gentleman in an Inverness cape. Sometimes he was a young gentleman, apparently from the country, smoking a cigar. Sometimes he was an old gentleman in spectacles; but always a merry, kind-spoken gentleman, with a great thirst for information upon all sorts of topics. He had a latch-key, had Sampson Lager, and came in and out without question. Little Helen gave it as her opinion, that he was doing low comedy business at some theatre, and did not always change his dress when he came home at nights; and, truly, Mr. Lager played many parts, but upon a stage larger than that of Covent Garden or the Britannia. Sometimes he would come in regularly, every evening, at nine, for a fortnight, and then would pack up two shirts and a pair of socks in a clean pocket-handkerchief, and not be seen again for a month.

On the day of Mr. Brandron's death at Westborough, Mr. Lager returned somewhat earlier than usual, and ordered tea, which was served to him by the fair Flora, in her usual scornful manner. How is it, that people who serve you with eatables and drinkables always regard you with such sovereign contempt? Talk about the arrogant bearing of Empresses, Duchesses, and great heiresses! They are pleasant and condescending in their haughtiest humours, in comparison with bar-maids and the young ladies who hand you your cup of scalding infusion of birch-broom at a railway station refreshment table.

As soon as the defiant Flora Wantley had vacated his apartment, and he had finished his meal, Mr. Sampson Lager lit his pipe, and began to enter into a conversation with himself—as was his custom when there was anything upon his mind. Not aloud. Oh, no! It was his fashion to speak to himself as though he were some one else; and he had in himself so attentive a listener, that his thoughts made themselves known and understood without even a whisper of their meaning.

"You've bin a thinkin' many times, Lager my boy," he mused, "of re—tiring into private life; and a many times summut has turned up to stop yer. You was a thinkin' of it no later than yesterday—and

what happens this afternoon? There's a good murder down in Kent; and there hasn't bin a good murder down there for one, two, three—four assizes." He dived his great hand into his coat pocket and produced an official-looking letter. "And the Authorities re—quest that Mr. Lagerger will set off forthwith for Westborough; and co—operate with the county police." He dived into his trousers pocket and produced a printed hand-bill. "And there's a re—ward of £100 for the capture and con—viction of the murderer. Good! Dooty sez—sez dooty, be off to Westborough, Sam Lagerger, and co—operate with the county police! That's what dooty sez. Interest sez—sez interest, have nothin' to do with them duffers, my man; but go in for the £100 yourself, and win. Now this ere's a ticklish case down at Westborough, I can see; and one pretty easy to be muddled. Penny-a-liners is handy at muddlin' a ticklish case; and so's crownors; but neither penny-a-liners nor crownors ain't fit to hold a candle for muddlement, to the county po—lice. So if you'll take my advice, Sergeant Lagerger, you'll com—bine dooty and interest in this ere business. You'll co—operate with these parties, just sufficiently to keep them a muddlin' *themselves*, and you'd go in quietly for the reward on your own hook. That's what *you'd* do, Sampson Lagerger, and so I tell yer."

"Going out again, Mr. Lagerger?" said Mrs. Wantley, as the detective passed through the shop.

"Why, yes mum, I've a little matter to attend to that will take me away for a day or two, if it's quite con—venient to you."

"Lor, Mr. Lagerger! Why, you know you go in and out as you please."

"So I do, mum—that's just it," said he, as though struck with the novelty of the idea. "You're right mum, as you usually is. And how's the family, Mrs. W.? Getting on middling, eh?"

"Only middling, thank you Sir."

"Ah, you've had a deal of trouble, you have. What did you say was the name of your boy as is locked up?"

"Bob, Sir," and the poor woman's apron twice was raised to her eyes.

"Well, well! don't cry. His time's pretty nigh up now, isn't it?"

"No, Sir; no. Not for six weeks come Monday."

"And he was took at Dover," said Mr. Lagerger, musing. "Now I shouldn't wonder if you'd got some friends down in Kent?"

"Not I, Sir; I never was there in my life."

"Never heard tell of a gentleman named Brandron I dare say?"

"Never to my knowledge."

"Well, it don't matter. I knows a party in the hop line as wants to meet with him, that's all. You aint in the hop line though, are you?" Mrs. Wantley could not say that she was.

"And you don't know anybody that is—down Westborough way?"

"Where's that, Sir?"

"Do you know Manchester?"

"Yes, Sir."

"And Pen—zance?"

"Can't say I do, Mr. Lagger."

"Well; it's about as far from Manchester as it is from Pen—zance, and you go there by railway; now you know, don't you?"

Mr. Lagger did not pause for a reply, but nodded kindly to the widow, made a violent blow, which ended in a pat on the head, at each of the children (who invariably surrounded everybody who entered the shop, and glared at him with their fingers in their mouths)—rushed out into the street in feigned terror of reprisals, turned the corner, and was lost in the crowd that streamed up and down in Ruby Row. He had not gone far when he nearly ran against a man and a woman who were proceeding towards Little Union Street. The man was dressed in a faded velvetreen shooting-jacket, corduroy knee-breeches, and a fur cap, and was half dragging, half-coaxing, the woman along. Habit made the detective turn and look after them; for there was something in the manner and appearance of the man that instantly attracted him. He watched till he saw them turn the corner by the pawnbroker's, and he had taken half a dozen steps after them when he suddenly checked himself.

"Lagger," he said to himself, "you're an ass. You're gettin' painfully ad—dicted to wool-gathering; you're not bound to keep your eyes in your waistcoat pocket; but when you're arter one game you shouldn't go a worreting artar another; you're a hunting for larks, my man, when there's better game in the stubble; and if you was a pointer-dog instead of a detective po—liceman, you'd get a warning for it—that's what you'd get!"

Solaced by this reflection he turned his back once more on Little Union Street, and went his way.

In the mean time Jim Rily and his sister had entered Mrs. Wantley's shop, and the former asked for a newspaper of the day before. This was quickly produced and paid for; but still the man remained fumbling with his purchase, staring about him in an embarrassed manner, and was affected all at once with a dry cough. It was meant that he had something to say, and did not exactly know how to begin.

THE TRUE STORY OF THE LADY OF LA GARAYE.*

"Look upon this presentment, and on this."

BEFORE us lies a quaint, time-stained little duodecimo, in the typography of the last century, with nothing alluring, unless to the bibliophile, in its appearance. Beside it is a dainty small quarto, in cover that aptly reminds one of the green leaves surrounding the scented violet. Sweet as a violet are its contents, fit to be perused on summer eve by haunted stream, as no doubt they will often be; for this poem will henceforth be the guide-book of the romantic tourist to La Garaye, as Scott's and Wordsworth's are to the Scottish and English lakes.

These two books illustrate one another. The elder, like some dim, dusty old Hall of our forefathers, with mouldy tapestry and tarnished armour, receives from Mrs. Norton a sudden glow of sunshine that pierces through the dancing motes to light up the picture of a lovely lady on the wall. The younger we might perhaps close with a sigh that the spell could not last—that the glamour of genius must have thrown a glow over facts that would not bear the torch of truth. Such, however, is not the case; and we the more readily collate the two, because Mrs. Norton does not seem to have derived her information from M. Cathenos' little work, which is not to be easily obtained, even on the spot. "Those who desire to read the narrative in plain prose," she says, "will find a notice of the Château de La Garaye in the 'Recherches sur Dinan et ses Environs,' by Luigi Odricci, curator of the museum of that town, and in the travelling guide lately issued by M. Peignet: both works published on the spot."

Cathenos' little book was published, both at St. Malo's and Dinan, in 1790. It was unlikely to obtain extensive currency; yet it is an interesting little chapter in family history, and, of course, eminently Roman Catholic.

Claude Toussaint Marot, he tells us, was born at Rennes, in Brittany, on the 27th of October, 1675. His parents were of distinguished birth, and of singular piety and benevolence; his father was Governor of Dinan. To cite a little trait of the latter, one day he caught a poor man stealing wood; but finding, on inquiry, that he was really in great need, he sent him fifty faggots. Claude was sent to school at Paris with his elder brother, and, with him, afterwards entered the corps of Mousquetaires. He was tall, athletic, and well formed; had fine eyes, an intelligent, attractive countenance; danced well, rode well, and was *tout-à-fait agréable*. His youth was blemished by follies of a grave kind, but the death of his

* *The Lady of La Garaye*. By the Hon. Mrs. NORTON. Macmillan and Co., Cambridge; and Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London. *Vies de M. de La Garaye et de Mde. de Pont Briand sa sœur*. Par M. R. CATHENOS, recteur, ancien Maire de Taden, et Administrateur du district de Dinan. A Saint Malo et à Dinan. M.DCC.XC.

father, when he was eighteen, touched him with transient compunction, and the death of his elder brother, eight years after, leaving him the head of the House of La Garaye, steadied him a good deal, and made him think of marriage. Happening to see Mademoiselle de la Motte Piquet pass him with her father in a carriage, he exclaimed, "A hundred thousand livres, with the hand of that young lady, would make me happy!" This impression did not pass off. She was a charming girl of nineteen, well educated, and of the sweetest disposition. They married—they were happy: to please her husband was her sole thought. With him she followed the chase, less, perhaps, from natural inclination than because she loved to do whatever he did. They lived for each other, and for this world, without much thought of another:

"Careless—but not impure—the joyous days
Passed in a rapturous whirl; a giddy maze,
Where the young Count and lovely Countess drew
A new delight from every pleasure new.
They woke to gladness as the morning broke;
Their very voices kept, whene'er they spoke,
A ring of joy, a harmony of life,
That made you bless the husband and the wife."

Now, mark what follows. They are going out hunting together—

"Like a sweet picture doth the lady stand,
Still blushing as she bows; one tiny hand,
Hid by a pearl-embroidered gauntlet, holds
Her whip, and her long robe's exuberant folds.
The other hand is bare, and from her eyes
Shades now and then the sun, or softly lies,
With a caressing touch, upon the neck
Of the dear glossy steed she loves to deck
With saddle-housings worked in golden thread,
And golden bands upon his noble head.
White is the little hand whose taper fingers
Smooth his fine coat—and still the lady lingers,
Leaning against his side; nor lifts her head,
But gently turns as gathering footsteps tread;
Reminding you of doves with shifting throats
Brooding in sunshine by their sheltering cotes.
Under her plumed hat her wealth of curls
Falls down in golden links among her pearls,
And the rich purple of her velvet vest
Slims the young waist, and rounds the graceful breast."

The Count comes up, and they speed away together—

"They ride together all that sunny day,
Claude and the lovely Lady of Garaye—

But now the ground is rough with boulder-stones,
Where, wild beneath, the prisoned streamlet moans;

The prisoned streamlet, struggling to be free,
 Baring the roots of many a toppling tree,
 Breaking the line where smooth-barked saplings rank,
 And undermining all the creviced bank,
 Till, gushing out at length to open space,
 Mad with the effort of its desperate race,
 It pauses, swelling o'er the narrow ridge
 Where fallen branches make a natural bridge,
 Leaps to the next descent, and, balked no more,
 Foams to a waterfall, whose ceaseless roar
 Echoes far down the bank: and through the forest hoar!

Across the water, full of peaked stones—
 Across the water where it chafes and moans—
 Across the water at its widest part,
 Which wilt thou leap, oh, lady of brave heart?

Their smiling eyes have met—those eager two;
 She looks at Claude, as questioning which to do.
 He rides—reins in—looks down the torrent's course,
 Pats the sleek neck of his sure-footed horse,—
 Stops—measures spaces with his eagle eye,
 Tries a new track, and yet returns to try.
 Sudden, while pausing at the very brink,
 The damp, leaf-covered ground appears to sink,
 And the keen instinct of the wise dumb brute
 Escapes the yielding earth, the slippery root;
 With a wild effort, as if taking wing,
 The monstrous gap he clears with one safe spring;
 Reaches (and barely reaches) past the roar
 Of the wild stream, the further lower shore;
 Scrambles, recovers, rears, and panting stands
 Safe 'neath his master's nerveless, trembling hands."

He waves to her to desist from following him, and calls out; but his voice is drowned in the noise of the torrent—

"He saw her, pausing on the bank above;
 Saw, like a dreadful vision of his love,
 That dazzling dream stand on the edge of death—
 Saw it—and stared—and prayed—and held his breath."

She attempts the leap—and falls.

"The heart grows humble in an awe-struck grief,
 Claude thinks not, dreams not, plans not her relief.
 Strengthen him but, oh God! to reach the place,
 And let him look upon her dying face!
 Let him but say, farewell—farewell, sweet love!
 And once more hear her speak, and see her move,
 And ask her if she suffers, where she lies,
 And kiss the lids down on her closing eyes,
 And he will be content.

He climbs and strives—
 The strength is in his heart of twenty lives;

Across the leaf-strewn gaps he madly springs,
 From branch to branch like some wild ape he springs,
 Breasts, with hot effort, that cold, rushing source
 Of death and danger. With a giant's force
 His bleeding hands and broken nails have clung
 Round the gnarled, slippery roots above him hung;
 And now he's near—he sees her through the leaves!"

Just as he reaches her, the other hunters sweep by, winding their horns,
 without his being able to answer them. Her fine horse is dead—she her-
 self quivering between life and death, He attempts to raise her a little:

"Oh, Claude! the pain!"

"Oh Gertrude, my beloved!"

"Then faintly o'er her lips a wan smile moved
 Which dumbly spoke of comfort from his tone,
 As though she felt half saved—not so to die alone."

We dare not quote all, though all is beautiful.

"He sits and watches, and she lies and moans;
 The wild stream rushes over broken stones,
 The dead leaves flutter to the mossy earth,
 Far-away echoes bring the hunters' mirth,
 And the long hour creeps by, too long—too long!
 Till the chance music of a peasant's song
 Breaks the hard silence with a human hope,
 And Claude starts up and gazes down the slope;
 And from a wandering herdsman he obtains
 The help whose want has chilled his anxious veins.
 Into a simple litter then they bind
 Thin cradling branches deftly intertwined,
 And there they lay the lady as they found her,
 With all her bright hair streaming sadly round her,
 Her white lips parted o'er the pearly teeth,
 Like pictured saints' who die a martyr's death;
 And slowly bear her, like a corse of clay,
 Back to the home she left so blythe to-day.
 The starry lights shine forth from tower and hall,
 Stream through the gateway, glimmer on the wall,
 And the loud pleasant stir of busy men
 In courtyard and in stable sounds again:
 And through the windows, as that death-bier passes,
 They see the shining of the ruby glasses
 Set at brief intervals for many a guest
 Prepared to share the laugh, the song, the jest.

He shivers, and hot tears shut out the sight
 Of that dear home for feasting spread so bright;
 The golden evening light is round him lying,
 The dark rooks to their nests are slowly flying,
 As underneath the portal, faint with fear,
 He sees her carried, now so doubly dear.

'Save her,' is written in his anxious glances,
 As the quick-summoned leech in haste advances—
 'Save her!' And through the gloom of midnight hours,
 And through the hot noon, shut from air and flowers,
 Young Claude sits patient—waiting day by day
 For health for that sweet Lady of Garaye."

Cathenos relates this tragic occurrence in the most dry and brief manner possible: "Un jour, assez pres de La Garaye, elle franchit un chemin, en faisant sauter son cheval d'un côté sur l'autre bord. L'élan fut violent, la secousse meurtrière . . . et depuis elle ne devint point mère."

It was time the young Count should receive a check of some sort, for the ardour of the chase led him to destroy much standing corn, as well as to expose his life to wild hazards. Other occurrences tended to sober and sadden him;—a dear friend suddenly abandoned the world for "La Trappe," and soon afterwards died there, witnessing a good confession. M. de La Garaye, in a visit he paid to the Bourbon springs, chanced to see some wretched Moscovite prisoners almost destitute of clothing, and he immediately supplied them with shirts. He also went through a short course of medical study, with a view to alleviating the sufferings of others. The sufferings of his patient young wife had touched his heart. She, too, could have said with our poor young Princess Amelia:—

"It then occurred, how sad 'twould be,
 Were this world only made for me."

"Revenu à La Garaye, il commença à distribuer quelques remèdes aux pauvres de la campagne, . . . et on vit un grand changement dans sa manière de vivre; mais ce changement ne fut pas entier, il conserva son goût pour la chasse."

"Rome was not built in a day." In this kind of life, which, says Cathenos, might now almost be called solitary, in comparison with what it had heretofore been, the young husband and wife made many salutary reflections on the vanity of earthly pleasures, on the void which they leave in the heart, and on the responsibilities of the rich. "Was I born for nothing better," would he say, "than to kill stags, wolves, and boars? To what good am I squandering my estate in such a senseless pursuit?" He knew, however, of no better course to pursue, but Providence was guiding him by means which he knew not. His beloved sister, Madame de Pont Briand, had only been confined two days, of her tenth child, when she lost her husband. The Count de La Garaye, who had been summoned to act as sponsor to the infant, was present at the death-bed of his brother-in-law. The impression it made on him was profound: he took aside a monk who was in the château, and said to him with strong emotion—

"You are happy, father; you are disengaged from worldly ties, and behold with composure the most terrible catastrophes. You are superior to reverses, and to the most painful misfortunes."

"It is true," replied the Monk, "that we live in the world without being of it; but we are not without hearts. That would be no honour to religion! Your brother-in-law deserved our regret, and we may mingle our tears for him together. Every state has its trials: both mine and yours. To submit our wills to the will of God, and follow His leading—that is what is required of us."

They conversed for some time on the subject; and the Monk, finding his presence no longer needed by Madame de Pont Briand, returned to his monastery.

Next day, at five o'clock in the morning, a man-servant presented himself at the monastery, to say that the presence of the Monk was earnestly desired at the château. He lost no time in obeying the summons, and was met by the Count, who carried him off to an avenue where they could talk freely.

"I have sent for you," said he, "to speak on a pressing matter. There is—there must be, a God, though He is dead to me, as I am to Him."

"Yes," said the Monk, "there is, and must be, as you say, a God; there is no truth more universally recognized. The man who enjoys the exercise of his reason sees everywhere traces of the goodness, the wisdom, and the power of the Supreme Being."

"I am convinced of it," said Monsieur de La Garaye; "what you have already said has touched me. Oh, how little have I thought of His goodness! How many claims has He to my heart! I have not faithfully served this good Master. I would fain, with the aid of His grace, consecrate to Him the remainder of my life; and I beg you to assist me with your counsels and prayers. I have questioned my heart. I find I am ready to dedicate all to him; but I aim not at an isolated life. I aspire to succour the unhappy; I am ready to sell my plate, furniture, equipages, horses, hounds, and to dismiss all my servants—except such of them, if any, as shall be willing to remain and assist me in ministering to the poor."

Saying which, the young man melted into tears.

"Can it be," said he, in broken accents, "that I have lost so many years in the pursuit of mere follies, and have neglected the sovereign good?"

The Monk let him give free course to his emotions, and then told him that his design was commendable, and that he had no doubt he would carry it out to the glory of God. He warned him, however, against precipitation in a matter so important; he had better begin by much prayer for strength and direction. His position was so distinguished, that his conduct would be open to public remark, and doubtless to censure and opposition from his friends—possibly from his wife.

The young nobleman seemed to apprehend no opposition in the latter quarter, though he said he certainly should not think of opposing her wishes.

"The Countess is here," added he; "let us go and seek her. I will open my mind to her, and hear what she says."

They accordingly returned to the château, and repaired to the Lady of La Garaye. Having dismissed her attendants—

"My love," said the Count, "God has put into my heart a design which I have already communicated to this good father. You shall hear what it is. I will abandon it, if you disapprove of it; if you approve of it, I will carry it out with all my heart. I have too long neglected my Maker for the sake of the world; I desire henceforth to renounce its pernicious maxims, to dismiss my servants, retrench my housekeeping, part with my carriages, horses, dogs, plate, and superfluous furniture, retaining only my lands, and to convert my house into a refuge for the poor. Say, my dear love, exactly what you think. If the plan is contrary to your inclinations, we will adopt some other."

The Countess replied by her tears. Ah! thought the Monk, she is unequal to the sacrifice. Who can wonder?

"My dear husband," said she at length, raising to him her beautiful eyes, "do not mistake these for the tears of affliction. What blessed news! Surely you remember that when you proposed to me last year a reform in your household, I said to you, 'Do not do things by halves; if you would do the right thing, do it altogether!' Thanks be to God for having inspired you with this generous purpose. I would subscribe to it, if need were, with my blood. All last night I was revolving in my mind something of the same kind; but I was more cowardly than you, I dared not speak to you of it. I believe now that God inclined our hearts mutually to the same point. How I thank Him for it! Oh, how exalted, how noble do you appear to me, you whom I have always so tenderly loved!"

Having mingled their tears together, the Count turned to the Monk and said—"Well, you see my wife's sentiments; what obstacle is there? Here are pen, ink, and paper; write down for us what we shall do to testify the liveliest possible sense of what we owe to God's mercy."

The Monk for some time was unable to check his tears; the others were still more affected. At length he said, "that a step of this importance ought to be preceded by a period of retreat, self-examination and confession, under the direction of some able and pious man."

"Will you, then, be that man?" said De la Garaye.

The Monk excused himself on the ground of incompetence, but was at length prevailed on to consent. The Count arranged to follow him to the monastery the same afternoon, and the Countess decided to go into retreat at St. Malo's for eight days, after which, they were all three to meet at Pont Briand and begin to put the project into execution.

Mrs. Norton gives a most charming picture of the old ecclesiastic, whom she calls, and who may have been, a Benedictine prior—

"Tender his words, and eloquently wise,
 Mild the pure fervour of his watchful eyes;
 Meek, with serenity of constant prayer,
 The luminous forehead high, and broad, and fair;
 The thin mouth, though not passionless, yet still
 With a sweet calm that speaks an angel's will;
 Resolving service to his God's behest,
 And ever musing how to serve Him best."

In retreat with such a director, Claude de La Garaye could learn nothing but what was good and high. When he came forth, his first act was reparation of the wrongs he had done—not wilfully, but heedlessly—in destroying poor men's farms and crops, &c. Each was believed on his word as to the amount of damage, and received compensation. On rejoining his Countess, they returned to La Garaye, where a crowd of poor awaited them at the gate. They embraced them, relieved them, and bade them come to dinner next day and bring with them any who should equally need relief. After supper, the Count spoke to his servants, who, with three honourable exceptions, said they had not been hired to wait upon poor people, and preferred being discharged. It is pleasant to find the Countess was able, as well as willing, to undertake some of their lighter work. Doctors sometimes take too black a view of a case; in some respects they did of hers: she was never what she had been—she was always, probably, a sufferer; but she was partially restored. At her instance, Claude still occasionally hunted the wolf; he tried abstinence from wine; but found it suited him best to take a little. "*Un bouilli, et deux entrées le midi, un rôti le soir, à moins qu'il n'y eut quelque étranger.*" Such was now his table. Of course, summer friends had vanished, without being regretted—the wise and the good remained to them. Three hundred poor were fed in his house; they were provided with a chaplain and a doctor.

It is so seldom that fiction is borne out by fact, or rather, poetry by prose, that we must be excused for dwelling a little longer on Claude's excellences. He established a dispensary; he studied chemistry, to the injury of his health; and to him we owe the discovery of essential salts. His goodness to the English prisoners of war at Dinan is well known. At length he gave a permanent form to his hospital, converting his multifarious offices into sick wards, and bestowing his personal attendance on those who filled them. The Lady of La Garaye aided him so far as her strength permitted, and became known as a skilful oculist—

"Her soft eyes, looking into other eyes,
 Bleared, and defaced to blinding cavities,
 Weary not in their task, nor turn away
 With a sick loathing from their glimmering ray."

Claude rose between four and five in the morning; devoted an hour or two to his study and laboratory; at seven, had family prayers, visited the sick, went to mass, and then breakfasted. Afterwards, a little

chemistry till eleven, when he superintended the hospital dinners, and dined himself. Then he repaired to his park, in which he furnished employment to many women and children; or, perhaps, he hunted the wolf. On his return he revisited the sick, supped with his wife at seven. Reading and prayers concluded the evening: all were in bed at half-past nine. Was this a rational life, or was it not? Was it likely to be a happy life or not?

It agreed with him, at any rate; for he lived to his eightieth year, and then "*sa mort fut la fin d'un beau jour.*" The Countess sank on her knees before the crucifix, and melted into tears. "Lord!" said she, in broken accents, "Thou gavest him to me, and Thou hast taken him away. Thy holy Name be praised: only give me strength to fulfil the last wishes of my beloved husband."

Her prayer was heard; she was endued with strength to fulfil every needful office of mercy to the sick, and to hear mass in the chapel where lay his cold remains. "My dear children," said she to those around her, "let us not weep, but pray!"

It might truly be said—

"The widow's and the orphan's tear
Bedewed his cold grave's side."

He was buried among the poor, in the cemetery of Taden, and never were more genuine tears shed at a funeral.

The Lady of La Garaye carried on his works of mercy, though on a smaller scale and with a feebler hand; being determined, she said, to die in harness. Her health suffered; she could not long minister to the sick; she became ill herself. She wasted away, lost her appetite, and was frequently obliged to keep her bed. From the month of April, 1757, she was unable to leave it: in June, she meekly prepared to die. Having received the last sacraments with piety and resignation, she departed this life, June the 20th, aged seventy-five years, having survived her husband rather less than two years. Such was the end of the lovely Lady of Garaye.

"Oh! loved and revered long that name shall be,
Though, crumbled on the soil of Brittany,
No stone, at last, of that pale Ruin shews
Where stood the gateway of his joys and woes.
For, in the Breton town, the good deeds done
Yield a fresh harvest still, from sire to son;
Still thrives the noble Hospital that gave
Shelter to those whom none from pain could save;
Still to the Schools the ancient chiming clock
Calls the poor yearnings of a simple flock,
Still the calm Refuge for the fallen and lost
(Whom love a blight and not a blessing cost)
Sends out a voice to woo the bleeding breast—
'Come unto me, ye weary, and find rest!'

And still the gentle Nurses, vowed to give
 Their aid to all who suffer and yet live,
 Go forth in snow-white cap and sable gown
 Tending the sick and hungry in the town,
 And shew them pictures on the quiet walls
 Of those who dwelt in Garaye's ruined halls!"

So ends Mrs. Norton: and so must we end. In our earlier time, when seven shillings and sixpence was a sacred capital, not lightly to be invested, we should probably have copied the whole, or nearly the whole, of this poem in round-text or scrawly manuscript, for our private and frequent delectation; but we dare not and need not do so now. We dare not, for it is unfair to shake all the fruit from the tree; we need not, for the book will be in everyone's hand. *Certes*, the poetesses of England have twined us a singularly pure and fragrant garland; and no flower in it is purer, fairer, or sweeter, than this white scented violet of Mrs. Norton's. Whether is better, to be a glow-worm, or a silk-worm, may be a problem to some of England's daughters; but Mrs. Norton, combining the *utile et dulce*, is both—she spins and she shines.

DAY BY DAY!

BY MRS. NEWTON CROSLAND.

Look at the oak from an acorn sprung,
 The oak whose bole is of Titan girth—
 The song-birds nestle its boughs among,
 And there have the future singers birth!
 But a knell is rung, with its sure decree—
 When the hour-glass shivers the sands are spilt—
 Of the wood of the hewn and sapless tree
 A rider of crested waves is built:
 And there seems to be sung as the ship glides on,
 "This is what Day by Day has done!"

The glacier, loos'd from the Ice King's hand,
 Moves on with a solemn march and slow,
 To a tune that the beating stars command
 Shall murmur for ages across the snow:
 But the wind finds a harp at last to play,
 And sounds a march that has greater speed,
 Till the glacier weeping itself away
 Is ready a Rhine or a Rhone to feed.
 But this is the tune, as the wind sighs on,
 "See you what Day by Day has done!"

A babe at the font ; then a gleesome child ;
 And a bride half veiled by her amber hair ;
 A matron wise, and a mother mild ;
 A grandam bent by many a care ;—
 And the shining hair, grown grey and scant,
 Is folded away from touch and sight—
 On the form of age do the sunbeams slant,
 But the inner heaven brings “ evening light ! ”
 And ever the while a lesson runs on,
 “ This is what Day by Day has done ! ”

Two hearts that are joined in Love’s Eden here,
 Thinking leaves ne’er fall, nor chill can come,
 And see not the serpent of change is near,
 To sting by turns—and by turns to numb :
 But at last the hiss is heard, and now
 The dreadful crest of the snake appears,
 And they fall apart with a broken vow
 Whose chasm cannot be filled by tears.
 This picture affrights—we its legend shun—
 “ See you what Day by Day has done ! ”

Yes, Time can be cruel with his right hand,
 But his left has a precious balm concealed—
 It will open wide at the One command,
 And the priceless treasure be all revealed :
 And perchance when Time shall be overthrown,
 When the olden things shall have passed away,
 Our souls to a larger wisdom grown
 Shall measure the worth of a single Day—
 With awe at the scheme which is here begun,
 And joy at what Day by Day has done !

FOR THE YOUNG OF THE HOUSEHOLD.

IN COZY NOOK.

A LITTLE GIRL PICTURED.

BY FREDERICA BREMER.

I HAVE a little girl at my hearth, in my home ; she is not mine—I wish she were ! But she is my daily enjoyment, and I cannot but wish that every home in this our world had such a little girl as its own ! Not that I think little girls in general to be such precious rarities, for “there’s plenty of them in the world,”—or a bit better, for the comfort and happiness of home, than an old lady, with mild eyes and sweet words of wisdom on her lips ; and I know more than one little girl who adds not a whit to the comfort of the home, but rather something the reverse. But my little girl, she whom I wish were mine, is the very reverse of the uncomfortable one. Nobody ever saw her surly or sour, or tiresome, or asking “What shall I do ?” No, she seems born with a peculiar clearness of what she has to do in this world, and what she is here for. It is therefore, perhaps, that her eyes shine so cheerily and bright every day’s morning, and that she is up and dressed almost as soon as she is awake. And then you might see her, washed, and nice and rosy as a dewy rosebud, standing by her mother’s knees, thanking the good Father in Heaven for the repose of the night and the life of the day, and imploring His blessing for all men—and, of course, for all little girls. After this she goes to work. She helps the maid to make fire in the oven ; she likes to light the fire, and the wood seems to burn all the brighter when it is the little girl who lights it. Then she helps mamma at the breakfast-table ; she knows precisely where papa and old grandmamma are to sit—what cups and things they prefer ; she puts everything right. Then she starts off for little brother, “the baby,” who is heard to grumble in his cradle ; and she wants to prevent his getting out of humour in the morning, for which he has great aptitude. And just as he is beginning to grumble, lo ! there she stands by his cradle, smiling over him, taking him up, kissing him, commiserating and moralizing him at once, with those indescribable but melodious tones of which good little girls have alone the secret, and which make baby forget that he intended to quarrel with the world and his family, and lets him give way to a joyous smile. And now he must be dressed—which is done by little sister, with good-humoured advice to stockings and boots, and other things, not to be “wrong-minded,” not to be obstinate, &c., for “serve they must,”—“do their duty they ought,” and—“There, we are ready !” And now baby is taken up in little sister’s arms, and carried out to say good morning to papa, and mamma, and grandmamma, and kiss and be kissed all round.

After this, he is to have his breakfast. It is the little girl who gives it him—who tastes the porridge, that it may not be too hot—who breathes cooling over it until it is just right, and carries it to his mouth with

recommendations to open it wide grandly, so that the "king's schooner" may get right into port, and not make shipwreck at the entrance—the first spoonful is for the little brother, the next for herself.

After breakfast, baby must amuse himself as he can, with his playthings: for the little girl must study her lessons, and be all attention to them.

She would not for the world that grandmother should shake her head when she recites them to her, or, maybe, give a meaning look to a certain corner of the room called the "shame corner," and where she knows that little girls and boys are put if they study very badly. But she has never stood there—and I do believe she never will.

It is just the same little girl who, two years ago, in the small children's school, when, upon the question, "What the Lord did the seventh day of creation?" and the children answered, "He rejoiced,"—elevated her clear voice and assumed, "but He was not at all tired, and He went to church!"

She is now a little older, and would not have answered so childishly. Still, I do not think she can even now think of repose or enjoyment, except in conjunction with some plan or project for the happiness of somebody else. You see it clearly in her face whenever she loiters, amusing herself, singing to her doll, or turning over the leaves of a book, or looking half-abstractedly on you or something else. She looks at once so good and so sweetly sly—she is clearly planning or plotting some little angel-trick! Nobody, be he a Swede or an Englishman, a Frenchman or a German, Dane or Italian, Christian or Pagan, ever looks at her attentively without being compelled—I say *compelled*—to smile in a peculiar way, so that he or she becomes, as it were, beautified by the smile, which clearly says, if the eyes do not—"What a darling creature you are!" Yes; she is a darling to everybody—and she is a cosmopolite;* for though you would hardly say, by her countenance, of what people she is, she unites, as it were, in one smile all peoples on earth, and everybody feels related to her by some magic love-tie.

But do not fancy that my little girl has any intentions to win or to charm you. Not a bit; she has too many other weightier things to do and to think of. She is busy the whole day, in one way or another; and if she is musing or studying, or playing, and she sees her mother doing some heavy household work, up she starts, wanting to help her. "It is not too heavy; no indeed, she is strong, very strong! Does she not carry baby in her arms many an hour, and is never tired?" She likes to be called "Little busy Martha;" and indeed she deserves that name, from morning, when she is helping everybody in the house, until night, when she lulls baby to sleep with the little sweetly melancholy song that has lulled most of us, women and men, in Swedeland, in our cradles:

"The squirrel went to make hay on the lawn,
With four of his brave little servants," &c.

Yet the sweetest hour of the day is, for the little girl, that in which she reposeth. Yes; but on the knee of her father, balancing in the rocking-chair, and listening to what he tells her of foreign countries, of savage men and customs, and

* "Cosmopolite:" Citizen of the world.—*Die*.

of good men who go among them, trying to make them better! Sometimes, attending to his words, her eyes will grow wider and wider, till they become as wells flowing over with tears. But the father knows the art to make them dry up again, and make the sun shine out of them, like Heaven's sun in the rainbow on the cloud.

Sometimes it is the little girl who has the word, and tells papa stories out of her own mind—and she has a large store of them. Now and then she is allowed to read aloud to him out of "Reading for the Home," or some other good magazine. (What, if she one day chance to read there this very talk about a little girl! It would be funny, but she would not know who it meant).

Lastly, she discloses her own little heart in the bosom of the Good Father, telling him her secret anguish if she has committed some fault, or her most secret wishes and hopes. She has some ambitious ones, the little girl, for the time when she "shall be great." She has some ideas of building a house for father and mother, and grandmamma, but not for little brother, for he shall also become "great," and learn to help himself! And then, when she has put everything right at home, she will go out to the people of whom her father has just spoken, and join those men who try to make them better and happier; or she may, as Robinson Crusoe did, discover and cultivate some unknown island, "when she will be great." I would bet ten to one that when she becomes a great girl—cultivated, educated—she will nevertheless not be otherwise, only in larger proportions and consciously, than what she is, unconsciously, even now—a good and glad some help to her fellow-beings, a true-hearted little servant of the Lord.

You know that Frederica Bremer, who has sent this story to me from Stockholm especially for "Cozy Nook," has written a great number of good books. She has travelled over America, visited many of the European countries, and after a residence of more than two years in Athens, has returned to her native Sweden with an enlarged mind, and a heart as fresh and warm as if—as if—she were still a little child! It is wonderful to me how well she writes English. I have not altered a single phrase; and though—(you children are *so* saucy)—you may call one or two of the expressions "funny," yet I know you will enjoy making the acquaintance of the good little girl whom my dear friend Frederica Bremer pictures!

Perhaps also you may enjoy the following Picture of another Little Girl:—

PICTURE OF ANOTHER LITTLE GIRL.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

"WILL you let it alone, Miss Mary!"

"Isabel, why should I let it alone?"

"Because your mamma said it was not to be touched."

"Very well, Isabel; then give me that book to read, if you please?"

"The books are all dusted and put in their places, Miss, except the grammar-book, and the spelling-book, and the 'rithmatic-book, and *Madnus's Questions*." (Mary laughed.) "You can have any of those you like, Miss; and, indeed, if you studied them a bit now, Miss Maddison would have less trouble with your lessons when she comes to-morrow."

"I give Miss Maddison very little trouble, Isabel—at least, so she says—and I have learned all my lessons; and it rains so that I cannot go out, and mamma has company, and—Ah! do, Isabel, let me have the kitten to nurse? Cook would give it me, only I must not go to the kitchen without mamma. Oh, do ask for the kitten!"

"To tear your frock, and dirty your sash, and scratch your face? No, Miss Mary; I know better than to let a Scratch Cat into the nursery."

"But 'Minnie-Joe' is as gentle as Angola kittens always are. She is exactly like the powder-puff Sally powders baby with. Please do let me have 'Minnie-Joe'?"

"No, Miss Mary, I cannot. Do sit down pretty, like a young lady, and keep your hands before you: you will soon be sent for."

"But look at the time I am wasting," persisted Mary. "Mamma often says—

'In books, or work, or healthful play,
Let my first years be passed.'

Now, this very day I have studied the 'books,' and I have done the 'work, and now I want the 'healthful play.' May I not have it, Isabel? Do get me Minnie-Joe!"

"Well," said Isabel, putting the request aside, "I like the idea of your not wanting to waste time. What is play, I wonder, but waste of time?"

"Not a bit of it," replied Mary. "Papa says that play is as necessary to a child as food, or air, or light, or even education: he tells us, when we learn, to be in earnest, and when we play, to be in earnest; and he would not approve, I know, of my being obliged to sit stiff, and stately, and quiet, after I have said my lessons, and practiced, and worked at my frame, and not had one bad mark. If it were not for the disgrace, I might as well go in the 'shame corner' at once, like Tiny, as sit bolt upright on this stool,—not allowed to read an amusing book, or look into the stereoscope, or have a game with Minnie-Joe. But I know what it all means," quoth the little lady; "you want the room to be kept as prim as a purse, because your old mistress visits mamma to-day, and will come up-stairs; and she likes young ladies to be kept in stiff-stays, and back-boards, and their elbows stuck into their sides, and would have them sit and walk all of a row—all of a row—on—on! And I should not wonder if she hates cats?"

"She just does," said Isabel.

"Well," continued Mary, after a pause, "I wish nurses and everybody would tell children the exact truth, and not go round the bush. Why could you not say, 'Miss Mary, don't, please, disturb the bookcase, or touch the stereoscope, or tumble your frock, or bring up Minnie-Joe, because my old mistress—though stiff and prim—has been very good to me, and I should not like her to see things in disorder, it would give her pain?' And she would say, 'Isabel has forgotten what I taught her now she has a fresh place.' And she was very anxious you should come to my mamma, Isabel, because my mamma is so kind and just to her servants."

Isabel opened her large round eyes, and looked very fixedly at Miss Mary Holroyde, who was a bright, clear-headed child—older than she looked; for she had light-brown hair, with a tone of auburn in it, that sometimes made her eldest brother (who styled himself an Eton man) call her "Little Foxy." Her brow was as white and pure as a snow-flake, and her eyes a deep violet blue; her features were delicate, and her figure very slight; so you can imagine she really looked younger than she was, and, moreover, was a pretty child to look at.

"And who, I wonder," said Isabel, "told you my thoughts, Miss?"

"Then I gave your thoughts the right words?" persisted Mary.

"Well, much about, Miss. I did want my good old mistress to see the rooms neat, and to see you nice, Miss—without a speck; and I know she can't abide cats."

"And why did you not say so, instead of diving about for reasons why I should not do this, and why I should do that, and taking away Minnie-Joe's character? Why did you not say the frank truth, and I would have sat me down as good as gold sooner than pain your old mistress by looking tumbled, or disturbing the room you have made up so neatly?"

And Mary sat down quietly, and took up her embroidery frame.

"Thank you, Miss; I am sure you are very good. Some young ladies are so unreasonable that I have been obliged to—to—to——"

"Tell stories to keep them in order?"

"Something very like it, Miss Mary."

"And, of course, they despised and disbelieved you when they found you out?"

"I don't know, Miss; only it's hard to think what to do."

"Mamma never allows us to deceive anybody, nor anybody to deceive us, not in the most trifling thing; so we know that whatever is told us is true. Do you remember this morning, when little Jimmy asked mamma if the medicine you prepared was nasty, she said, 'No, not "nasty" Jimmy, but very disagreeable, yet it must be taken?'—(somehow, when mamma says *must*, we know it is all over; we can sometimes get round papa, but mamma, never! Neither ever tell us a story; they both say they should be ashamed to have a child who could not bear the truth, no matter how severe it was, and we are all grown proud of being trusted with truth)—you saw how poor little Jimmy's eyes filled with tears, and his dear fat cheeks flushed, but he made a fierce dash at the cup, and drank it off like a hero."

"He did, indeed, Miss Mary; I thought your mamma would have coaxed him,—he is such a little fellow,—and told him it was nice, and offered him a lump of sugar or a brandy-ball if he took it."

Mary drew up her little person with a great deal of dignity.

"All our children are above being bribed, Isabella, though we are delighted to be rewarded. I must tell you how my eldest sister, Jane, was rewarded—not for an act of self-denial—but *by* it. Isabella, when you came, did not mamma tell you to speak the truth to us always?"

"Yes, Miss, she did, and I would not tell *her* a story for the world; but I did not think she would be particular that way with the very little children. I daresay it is much as they are brought up," added Isabel, after a pause.

"I have known young ladies and gentlemen get into such trouble for fib-telling, which they never would have done if they had not been told fibs."

"Very likely, Miss, but sometimes children want to know what they ought not to know, and yet *worrit* to find out; what can a servant do then?"

"You had better ask mamma, Isabel; but I think, when we want to know anything we ought not to know, mamma just says, 'My dear, you shall know that hereafter; I will not tell you now.'"

"But, Miss, does that stop your *worriting*?" Mary paused a minute.

"Frank sometimes tries hard to gain his point, but mamma is as firm as a rock, and never loses her temper; so it is no use; and even Frank shrugs his shoulders, and walks off. Indeed, I know I have often teased mamma to tell me what she says I ought not to know yet, and have thought it hard to wait for the 'by and bye,' that is so long coming—yes, and I have had a good cry over it, though I knew all the time mamma was right."

There was a pause; Isabel was given to think over what she heard, but she sometimes asked questions very abruptly. At last she said,—

"Miss, will you tell me why you call the kitten 'Minnie-Joe'?"

"Why, because we do not know whether it is a lady or a gentleman; if it grows up to cat-hood, and has kittens, we shall continue to call it 'Minnie'; if it has *not* kittens, then we shall believe it a gentleman, and call it 'Joe.'"

It really was very pleasant to see Mary Holroyde sit so patiently in the midst of temptations (for she was fond of reading, and fond of play) working at her frame, so that the room might continue in what Isabel called "apple-pie-order," simply to gratify a new servant and an old lady whom she did not very much like. The old lady always looked sharply at little girls, as if she longed to find fault with them, and if she could not, she turned away with an air of disappointment; indeed, one of the reasons she came so seldom to Mrs. Holroyde's was, that the family was in such excellent order—every thing going on "like clock-work," business treated as business, and abundant time and means given for amusement—that even this very prim old lady could discover nothing wrong, except, indeed, that she thought there was too much time given for relaxation, and she could not understand how Mr. and Mrs. Holroyde felt such interest in all the "innings" and "outings" of their boys' cricket, and enjoyed the girls' games, as if they were boy and girl themselves! Mary certainly did not take part in the household work, like Miss Bremer's little girl. The domestic habits of Sweden and England are very different; but I am sure it would make our girls more useful, and if more useful, much happier, if they took a part, not in household labour, but in domestic thoughts, and the light work and arrangements quite con-

patible with the graces of educated life. When I was a young girl, I was sent down to the old housekeeper twice a week, to observe, and assist in the manufacture of creams and jellies, and cakes, and what she called "whips,"—I delighted in "whips;" the rich cream smelt so sweet,—and it was such fun to be perched on the snow-white table in the housekeeper's room,—the honeysuckle twining round the window, and the birds waiting on the sill for crumbs,—with a huge old china pan in my lap, whip, whip, whipping away at that beautiful cream, and then weighing the quantities, and helping (as she permitted me to believe) the kind old woman to pick fruit for the preserves—and such preserves they were! such piles of peaches and nectarines, and such tying up of bunches of grapes in muslin bags, to keep for the winter; and the crocks full of boiled black currants for the poor, who of course would have sore throats by and bye; and the eask of "groats," to be made into gruel for the sick; and the medicine-chest always re-filled in November; and the stews of horehound and honey; and the dryings of camomile flowers, and the bunches of sweet marjoram; the banks of violets that were rifled to make syrup-of-violets for teething children; and the large baskets of red roses for conserve, according to our simple belief a cure for consumption,—to say nothing of my beloved mother's "alimbie," in which she distilled rose-water and lavender-water, and peppermint-water and pennyroyal-water, all to comfort and help the poor. And then the dairy! Out at five, in the delicious air of May and June, and away to the dairy; on churning-days to turn the churn for a few minutes, or, better still, obtain permission from "Stately Peg" (as the dairy-maid was called) to prepare with my own dainty hands the "early butter" for breakfast; then away for my bath in the deep blue sea, whose music is after all the sound I remember with the greatest pleasure.

I did not like cutting-out and making poor clothing, half as much as I did the freedom and variety of employment in the housekeeper's room; but all were an interest to me then, and have been of advantage to me ever since, as I have never been rich enough to keep a housekeeper: still, I have known how a house—small or large—should be kept; I learned how to think for and help the poor; and this sort of knowledge engenders sympathy, and creates good, healthy independence—the independence to help as well as to have; and we should not have such a delicate population of young ladies if it became the fashion, as it was—much more in my grandmother's days than in mine—for the young of the household to play at housekeeping now and then, as one of the duties that will perhaps belong to their after-life. The habits of Miss Bremer's little girl, and the habits of my little girl, mingled together, would, I believe, make a very perfect young lady for either Sweden or England. The Swedish child would need a little refinement for England, and the English maiden need some Swedish training in utility.

It is very certain, that, whatever they do in girlhood, the little Misses must do something more than dress and dance, and sing and play, and excel in accomplishments of all hues, when they grow to woman's estate. And housekeeping, I beg to observe, is *not* to be learned by inspiration; it must be thought of and weighed, just as poor Mrs. O'Brian used to weigh flour *versus* butter for a great cake.

I have gone away from that good Mary and Isabel, just to say those few words about the occupations which our stately grandmamas did not think

derogatory to their character as gentlewomen; and I am certain it would increase the health, and add greatly to the interest which every English girl ought to feel in the great blessing of an English home, if she comprehended and practised some of its domestic duties, while benefiting so largely by its rights.

Mary certainly thought the old lady was a long time coming; she had worked earnestly at her lessons, and felt she had earned amusement, and her needle went very slowly.

"Never mind a little confusion, Miss Mary," said Isabel, quite won over by Mary's self-denial. "Take any book you like, dear; and I don't care much if I do bring up Minnie-Joe—she is as clean as a down puff, and I do not think she could soil that pretty sash."

"No; you remember you said the old lady could not bear cats, so I will not have Minnie-Joe while she is in the house; but I should like a book. I hate that scarlet poppy; I have had to take out the black three times because of miscounting," and she stuck her needle in with a do-not-another-stitch-to-day manner. Isabel took down the book Mary wished for, and for some minutes Mary read; then she turned over the leaves with unmistakable indifference, and then yawned in a manner that made Isabel exclaim, "Law, Miss Mary!"

"Well, Isabel, I am really weary doing nothing, and I think I will tell you the story I promised about my sister Jane. It always makes me fresh and glad to think of her; and this is really an adventure—only you must close the door, and sit opposite to me, and observe every word I say."

"Oh, dear me! yes, Miss."

"I shall begin like the old story-books: Once upon a time, on a fine, warm, moonlight night in June—"

"Hush, Miss Mary! the voices are coming up stairs," and she opened a little bit of the door; "No, they are only going out into the conservatory."

"A fine moonlight night in June," persisted Mary—Isabel closed the door, and sat down—"we were all in bed and asleep, except my sister Jane; she had sat up to finish a book, and the moon was so bright that she put out her candle, and sat so that the moonlight streamed in on her book. She heard the turret clock strike one—"

"They are on the stairs Miss Mary, now, certainly," exclaimed Isabel; "oh, I am so sorry—just as the clock struck one."

"Yes, just as the clock struck one."

But I must tell you the story of SISTER JANE next month, exactly as Mary told it to Isabella.
